



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 21, 2005

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Preventing Evasion of Missouri's Law

JEFFERSON CITY—With our new governor passionately opposed to abortion, the General Assembly no longer fears gubernatorial vetoes on legislation that protects the safety of our children and the lives of the unborn. So when the Missouri Senate this week gave first-round approval to a bill strengthening abortion-related laws, it marked long overdue progress for the prevailing pro-life platform in Missouri.

Senate Bill 2 allows lawsuits to be brought against anyone who helps transport a minor across state lines to obtain an abortion. Missouri law already requires any female under the age of 18 to get permission from a parent, guardian or court before she can have an abortion. Without SB 2, girls who get pregnant are able to evade Missouri's law by terminating their pregnancy in other states such as Illinois, which does not require that minors have parental consent. Getting an abortion affects individuals mentally, emotionally and physically. Our children should not be alone in the decision-making process. Parents not only have the right to know when their child is pregnant, but they also have the right to protect their unborn grandchildren if they so wish. This legislation holds accountable those who dodge Missouri's law to end pregnancies without parental consent.

The bill also tightens regulations for abortion providers. Physicians at abortion clinics must have privileges to provide obstetric and gynecological care at hospitals within 30 miles of the clinic. This will ensure that a woman who gets an abortion will receive the best care and should any complications occur, a qualified hospital would be nearby.

Two provisions in the bill aim at promoting alternatives to abortion. One calls for people to be able to file for a tax credit if they contribute to a pregnancy support center, which provides support to women and encourages birth over abortion. Another specification in the measure requires physicians to include in

their report the reason the abortion was sought, and if the patient had been using birth control. This will foster a documented conversation between the physician and the patient and make the woman aware of the ramifications of terminating her pregnancy.

When a girl finds out she is pregnant, she is often frightened and willing to go to any lengths to avoid having a baby, including seeking out the aide of someone else to help them obtain an abortion in another state. Missouri's parental consent law was created to encourage parents and their pregnant minors to choose a course of action together. To enforce the law and preserve the open relationship between parents and their children, this bill is necessary. Circumventing the law should not be legal, especially when the well-being of our children and our children's children is on the line.

With overwhelming legislative and gubernatorial support, I expect this bill to soon become law.

*Senator Gary Nodler represents the people of Newton, Jasper
and Dade counties in the Missouri Senate.*