



Senator Matt Bartle – Serving Jackson County

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[Standing on the Side of Life](#)

With the legislative session ready to kick off next week, I am preparing to file a resolution of the utmost importance. This resolution makes an emphatic statement to the United States Congress that the Missouri General Assembly strongly opposes any efforts to make abortion the federal law of the land. Thanks to legislation introduced in Congress in the spring of 2007, deceptively coined the “Freedom of Choice Act,” we are in danger of losing all of the safeguards that have been developed over the last 35 years in response to the U.S. Supreme Court’s ill-advised edict in *Roe v. Wade*.

The so-called Freedom of Choice Act, if passed by Congress, would establish in federal law an unlimited right to an abortion—during all stages of pregnancy. This new law would prohibit the State of Missouri from fulfilling its role of protecting all of our citizens—both born and unborn—meaning that all of the carefully drafted protections for unborn babies and expectant mothers currently existing in our law would be thrown out the window. Even partial-birth abortion, the heinous procedure (outlawed in the Show-Me State thanks to overwhelming bi-partisan efforts) where an infant is killed after being almost completely delivered, would again become legal. In addition, Missouri citizens might soon lose the right to keep their tax dollars from paying for the taking of innocent human life.

Currently, this dangerous legislation is pending in committees in both the U.S. House and Senate. For those of us dedicated to protecting the lives of the smallest and most vulnerable among us, it is imperative that it not gain any further traction. Since *Roe*

v. Wade, both federal and state lawmakers passionate about defending unborn children have helped put certain protections in place—within the bounds of the court’s decision.

These now-threatened protections include common-sense laws—found right here in the Show-Me State—that require parental notification when a young girl is seeking an abortion and that provide a woman an opportunity to consider the gravity of her decision and to be fully informed before deciding to go through with an abortion. In addition, laws requiring abortion clinics to meet certain minimum safety guidelines required of other medical centers would be overturned, as would protections for medical staff who refuse to participate in abortions.

It would be a tragedy to see the protections we have worked to enact for so many years be dissolved by the United States Congress. Our options as state legislators are limited, but we must do what we can. It is my hope that by passing—with strong bipartisan majorities—a resolution to send to Missouri’s Congressional delegation, the U.S. Congress and the President of the United States, declaring emphatically that the Show-Me State supports the right to life for all unborn children and that we oppose any efforts to enshrine abortion on demand in federal law, we will be able to help stop this very dangerous legislation.

If you have any comments or questions about this week’s column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at matt_bartle@senate.mo.gov or by phone at (888) 711-9278. My web address is <http://www.senate.mo.gov/bartle>.

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