

State Senator Robert Mayer The Mayer Memo

Senator Robert Mayer - Serving Butler, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Stoddard & Wayne Counties



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Legislation Offering More Protections for Pregnant Women and the Unborn Advancing in the General Assembly

Major pro-life legislation is advancing through the General Assembly, and I couldn't be more pleased. On March 11, the Missouri House overwhelmingly approved two pro-life bills that seek to criminalize coerced abortions. The legislation is similar to a companion bill I am sponsoring — [Senate Bill 264](#) — that has been approved by a Senate committee and is headed to the Senate floor for debate. Regardless of which bill moves the fastest through the Legislative process, I'm pleased the full Missouri Senate is very likely to soon debate this very important matter.

The proposed legislation is designed to make it a crime to coerce an abortion and anyone found guilty of coercing an abortion would face varying degrees of criminal penalties depending on the act committed. This would include such acts as stalking, assaulting, or delivering written or verbal threats in order to coerce an abortion. Also, any employer who would threaten to fire a woman or reduce her pay or anyone who would threaten to take away a college scholarship could face jail time. The bill would also make it a felony — punishable up to seven years in prison — for doctors who knowingly perform an abortion on a female they know to have been pressured into having an abortion.

Another important component of the legislation would require physicians to provide a variety of information about abortions and the fetus to women before an abortion, including information on abortion alternatives. The legislation would also give a pregnant woman or teen the opportunity to view an ultrasound and listen to the heartbeat 24 hours before the abortion procedure.

No woman of any age should ever be coerced into having an abortion. As an ardent supporter of the protection of life for unborn children, I believe this proposed legislation would serve to provide stronger protections for pregnant women and unborn children, and I really hope it becomes Missouri law.

As always, if you have 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 phone at 1-877-291-5584.

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