

Texas Has Become the First State in America to Ban Abortions

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Texas just became the first state in nearly 50 years to be allowed to protect unborn babies by banning almost all abortions.

On Wednesday, [the state heartbeat law went into effect](#), prohibiting abortions once an unborn baby's heartbeat is detectable, about six weeks of pregnancy. The legislation has the potential to save tens of thousands of babies' lives in Texas, including about 100 every day.

“At 12 a.m., Texas became the first state EVER to enforce a heartbeat law! YOU made this possible!” Texas Right to Life said in a statement. “God bless Texas!”

Planned Parenthood, the American Civil Liberties Union and others filed a desperate appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court on Monday, asking the justices to temporarily block enforcement of the law. But as yet, Justice Samuel Alito, who is in charge of emergency petitions from Texas, has not issued a decision. Up until now, state heartbeat laws have been blocked in court. The precedent established in *Roe v. Wade* prohibits states from banning abortions before an unborn baby is viable. But the Texas law is unique from other heartbeat laws because it includes a private enforcement mechanism that allows people to file lawsuits against abortionists who violate the law.

State Sen. Bryan Hughes, a Republican who sponsored the bill, described his legislation as “the most powerful pro-life legislation in Texas history,” [according to The Epoch Times](#).

Indeed, it may be. The law has the potential to save tens of thousands of babies from abortion. In 2020, about 54,000 unborn babies were aborted in Texas, and about 85 percent happened after six weeks of pregnancy, according to state health statistics. That means more than 100 unborn babies with beating hearts may be spared from abortion every single day in Texas.

Earlier this week, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton urged the Supreme Court to allow Texas to enforce the law, saying the pro-abortion groups' arguments are flawed. “There are many reasons that the Applicants are not entitled to the extraordinary relief they seek,” Paxton told the court. “The most obvious is that Applicants seek an injunction from this Court that would utterly fail to prevent any of the harm they claim will occur once Texas Senate Bill 8 becomes effective. This Court cannot expunge the law itself. Rather, it can enjoin only enforcement of the law. But the Governmental Defendants explicitly do not enforce the law, and the private-individual respondent testified that he will not do so.”

Mark Lee Dickson, director with Right to Life of East Texas, is the private individual named in the pro-abortion groups' lawsuit. According to the Epoch Times, Dickson's lawyers also filed a brief to the Supreme Court arguing in favor of the law. The abortion industry “cannot show that an injunction against the named defendants will prevent the irreparable harms that they allege, and an injunction that extends beyond the defendants would be patently unconstitutional,” the brief states.

On Monday, the American Civil Liberties Union, Planned Parenthood, Whole Woman's Health and other abortion groups asked the Supreme Court to stop Texas from enforcing the law, [according to the Dallas Observer](#).

In their appeal, the groups said the law “would immediately and catastrophically reduce abortion access in Texas” and potentially cause many abortion facilities to close. Amy Hagstrom Miller, CEO of the Whole Woman's Health abortion chain, told the Observer that they plan to continue doing abortions right up until the minute the law goes into effect. Other abortionists also said they were rushing to abort unborn babies in Texas before Wednesday.

Meanwhile, pro-life organizations are reaching out to pregnant mothers in need, offering information and resources to help them and their babies. Abby Johnson, who lives in Texas, said her organization LoveLine is ready to provide financial and material help to mothers in need and her ministry And Then There Were None can assist former abortion workers in finding new jobs and healing from their abortion work. “We know women will not stop wanting abortions after September 1 and [we] have in place a robust ministry, Loveline, that has already helped more 400 women in crisis pregnancies get the help they need to carry their babies to term and support their families,” Johnson said. “We urge them to contact us.”

Human Coalition, another pro-life organization that provides pregnancy and parenting resources, also is ready to help Texas women with emotional support, resources and assistance to create safe and stable environments for themselves and their families.

“Undoubtedly, today is a historic and hopeful day,” said Human Coalition Action Texas legislative director Chelsey Youman. “While today we are hopeful for the thousands of babies whose lives will be saved, we are also hopeful for their mothers. Texas has spent decades creating a vast support system for pregnant women for this very day. Organizations like mine will not rest because we are actively helping women facing unexpected pregnancies.”

Along with passing the heartbeat law this spring, Texas state lawmakers also [increased support to help pregnant and parenting mothers and babies, ensuring that they have resources to help them choose life](#). Among other things, they voted to invest \$100 million into the Texas Alternatives to Abortion program, which provides free counseling, parenting classes, diapers, formula, job skills training and more. If the Texas law will remain in effect or ultimately be upheld as constitutional in court remains uncertain, but pro-life leaders are hopeful now that the Supreme Court has a conservative majority.

In 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court took away the states' ability to protect unborn babies from abortion under *Roe v. Wade*, and instead forced states to legalize abortion on demand. *Roe* made the United States one of only seven countries in the world that allows elective abortions after 20 weeks. The court is scheduled to hear a Mississippi case in the fall that challenges this precedent.

Polls show [Americans support heartbeat laws](#). [An April poll by the University of Texas-Austin](#) found that 49 percent of Texans support making abortions illegal after six weeks of pregnancy, while 41 percent oppose it. In 2019, a national Hill-HarrisX survey also found that 55 percent of voters said they do not think laws banning abortions after six weeks – when an unborn baby's heartbeat is detectable – are too restrictive.