



Life Matters

Discussing life matters,
because life matters

June 2024

Editor & Writer: Jim Burke

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We welcome newcomers to our
events and meetings

Donate Here

<https://coalition-for-life-of-iowa.square.site/>

Amazing June

The Iowa Supreme Court will allow the Heartbeat Law to go into effect. Expect it to be enforced starting in mid-July. This is the biggest pro-life victory in Iowa in our lifetimes! Iowa's heart beats on!

Cedar Rapids Planned Parenthood remains closed, but we have information indicating they are making plans to reopen. This is a time we need to remain prayerful and vigilant. As I've said before, it's easier to keep a place closed than to close an abortion provider.

We brought a busload of pro-lifers to Des Moines for the Iowa March for Life. This happened before the court's ruling, and we heard lots of great speakers.

We had a booth at the Linn County Fair. It was great to get out in the public with the pro-life message.

In this newsletter, the government update is more of a continuation of the Heartbeat article on the prior page. News at this time of year often arises from governmental actions.

Upcoming Events

Second Tuesdays
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

CFLI Board Meetings (2nd Tuesdays)

Get involved in our organization!

Where: Contact us.

More: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Sep 25 – Nov 3
1-hour time slots

40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil

Join us in praying for an end to abortion in a peaceful prayer vigil!

Where: Sidewalk outside Planned Parenthood

3425 First Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA

More info: <https://www.40daysforlife.com/cedarrapids>



Allow Heartbeat Law Enactment

Prevent Heartbeat Law Enactment



McDermott

May

Oxley

McDonald

Christensen

Mansfield

Waterman

Iowa's Heartbeat Revived!

The biggest pro-life victory in Iowa since Roe vs. Wade unfortunately went into effect over half a century ago has taken place! Even the Dobbs ruling from two years ago had no immediate effect on Iowa's abortion laws, but it allowed for Iowa to push for the enforcement of Iowa's Heartbeat Law.

The Iowa Supreme Court ruled in favor of life on Friday, June 28, 2024. Officially, the ruling reverses the injunction that prevented the Iowa Heartbeat Law from going into effect/being enforced while the challenge to the law itself worked through the appeals process. But in clear terms, the Heartbeat Law can be enforced. Procedurally, it will take roughly 3 weeks/20 days before enforcement would begin. Also, the case regarding the law itself will continue at the district court level.

Justice McDermott wrote the majority opinion, joined by three of the other justices. They accepted the easier "rational basis" for determining whether laws about

abortion are constitutional. This precedent should make it easier to uphold the law as it continues through the district court.

The majority opinion states, "...we conclude that the fetal heartbeat statute is rationally related to the state's legitimate interest in protecting unborn life. We thus reverse the district court order entering the temporary injunction blocking enforcement of the fetal heartbeat statute and remand for further proceedings." Note that our state's supreme court just recognized the legitimate interest in protecting unborn life.

The easier legal basis and the clearly stated recognition of unborn life and the state's interest in protecting it should also make it easier to uphold future pro-life laws. This combination suggests that if Iowa lawmakers would pass laws providing protection from conception, like many of the Southern states, Iowa could become abortion-free, with limited exceptions.

Procedurally, it can take about 20 days/3 weeks to lift the injunction against the law. Thus, the 20-week limit remains in effect until enforcement of the Heartbeat Law begins in mid-July. The law did not lay out clear consequences, but disciplinary actions could occur upon violation of the law.

Last year, the same court with the same justices ruled on an identical law, but the result was different. This was because Justice Oxley recused herself at that time, due to a potential conflict of interest. Governor Reynolds called a one-day special session last July to re-pass the identical law, since the three justices who prevented the law from going into effect referred to it as hypothetical law. They suggested that the law was passed with no intention of ever being enforced, since Roe was in force at the time. Thus, passing the identical text at a time when it could be enforced sent the message that not only was it not hypothetical, but neither was the original law. 🗳️



Government Update

The law passed with a wider margin than the first time. A judge prevented the law from going into effect after very little time of enforcement. Justice Oxley had no conflict of interest on this newly-passed version of the law, so she could join the three other justices who constituted the majority that ruled in favor of life.

Two of the justices wrote dissenting opinions. One was written by Chief Justice Christensen. The other was written by Justice Mansfield.

The chief justice's dissent was disappointing. It started out by making the history of abortion law in Iowa appear like it was driven mostly by men's oppression of women, rather than by scientific advances that revealed the reality of life in the womb.

The dissent later pointed out that the history was not as clear cut as the majority opinion would suggest. The primary example given was from the days when Iowa was not yet a state, and thus referred to territorial law. But the example focused on abortion being allowed

to save the mother's life, back in the days when medical practices were not as advanced. The thing is that the Heartbeat Law also provides that same exception, so it failed to provide the weight that it may have had if it was allowing similar abortions as are available today.

The other justice's dissent was more compelling, but still had shortcomings. This dissent focused very heavily on practical matters regarding the way things would work if the law was allowed to take effect. It still cited other legal cases, but really focused on the practical side of things.

They both used language that suggested they favor legal abortion regardless of the legal precedents. When the chief justice quoted territorial law, such as the following, it made it seem rather clear to me that even when Iowa was a territory, they recognized the unborn as a child, that it lived because they referred to causing its death, and even used the term "destroy". This is some of the quoted text, referring to the original

prohibition to: "...destroy such child, and thereby cause its death, unless the same shall be necessary to preserve the life..."

Conclusion

If the ruling had come out a week earlier, we could have had an even more amazing rally in Des Moines for the Iowa March for Life. However, the opposition would have likely appeared in numbers if that had happened. This sequence of events granted a calmer and more civil circumstances.

Abortion is still legal in Iowa up to 20 weeks for now. The Heartbeat Law will shift that to roughly 6 weeks. This ruling makes a pathway to protection from conception something within grasp of our society.

Pray for the protection of human life throughout the states. Some states have a similar path to full protection, while others need prayers to protect from going the other way. 🙏

Pro-Life Challenge



Please pray for God to work in the lives of people, in particular:

Rockford, IL abortion site;
Minnesota's PP sites;
Students for Life in Iowa;
lawmakers & judges;
religious leaders

VOLUNTEER



Help Us!

Use your skills to help pro-life efforts, and invite friends and family to attend our events. Invite them to help us out. Many hands make for light work!



March & Fair

The **Iowa March for Life** went well, and several of our members joined us thanks to our bus! It was a bit warm that day, but the rain stayed away during the event.

We had a table at the event. Pro-life organizations of several types formed a ring around the Capitol Rotunda.

Our governor could not attend, but a statement was read on her behalf. We heard our state Attorney General speak. She was responsible for defending our laws.

We heard powerful talks from a few religious leaders. Sue even got to introduce one of them.

Hope Miller spoke about "Changing the Culture". She is a younger voice in the movement, and brought that perspective to us through her talk.

There were organizations that help pregnant women present. We heard from them about what they do.

The speakers filled roughly one hour. Then we marched. Then we enjoyed some snacks before returning home.

The **Linn County Fair** allowed us to reach more of the general public who may not know about us, otherwise. We hope to engage the general public more often at events like this.

Although this time, we stuck with a traditional pro-life booth, our affiliation with the Equal Rights Institute (ERI) helped us learn about other approaches that allowed another Iowa pro-life organization to have at least 240 conversations with pro-choice people at their county fair last year. It's energizing their activities.

Rather than preaching to the choir, such outreach can make a huge difference in how the public perceives pro-lifers and pro-life issues. ERI has some effective ways to carry out productive discussions with people. Many of our members have taken some of ERI's training.

If you might be interested in converting the culture in this way, we can provide access to training and we may try to incorporate some extra practice in advance of such activities. Let us know if you are interested. We still need to assess future options. 🌱

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Spread the Word!

Do you know other pro-life people who might like to subscribe to this newsletter?

- Tell them about it
- Forward a copy to them
- Print a copy to hand to friends

Do you have ideas you want discussed in future issues? Contact us with your suggestion. We may consider including your article if you prefer to write your own.

Did you spot some issues with this newsletter that really bug you? Then perhaps you'd like to help edit it. Contact us to see how you can help.

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Coalition for Life of Iowa

P.O. Box 864
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406