

To Whom It May Concern,

We are writing as practicing physicians in Minnesota to **ferverently oppose the newly proposed bill, “Protect Reproductive Options Act” (PRO Act), HF1.**

We give as support for our position the following considerations:

A patient’s “right” to healthcare does not include freedom to harm or kill another individual

The bill states that “Every individual has a fundamental right to make autonomous decisions about the individual’s own reproductive health” (1.14-1.15). We agree that patient autonomy in the patient-doctor relationship is paramount. However, in no context does personal autonomy permit the killing of another person. The bill further references the need to defend “personal privacy” (1.21). Physicians are bound to protect their patient’s privacy by HIPAA, but this requirement is void in the case of imminent danger to self or others. Why should this not be held when a patient confesses a desire to kill an unborn child?

Allowing unopposed abortion defines the value of human life as subjective

The essential question at play in any abortion debate is the nature of human life and when such life deserves protection from the state. Late-term abortions presuppose that children of that age do not deserve legal protection. Ironically, a baby at 24 weeks gestation could be vigorously resuscitated in a neonatal ICU or dismembered by an abortionist depending on the will (free or coerced by an abusive partner or parent) of the mother. Additionally, the murder of a pregnant woman resulting in the death of her baby is considered a “double homicide” at the same time that her baby could be legally terminated if she simply consents to it. Allowing these contradictions to co-exist asserts that *the dignity of human life depends on whether another human being wants it to exist*. This is a horrendous conclusion that threatens the essential concept that human life has inherent value deserving of protection by our state.

Minors should not be allowed to make the life-altering decision of abortion

This law seems to allow minors unopposed freedom to terminate their pregnancies without parental involvement. As science and personal experience can attest, the brains and decision-making capacity of children and adolescents do not have the capacity to make decisions of this magnitude that will alter the rest of their lives, particularly under the tremendous stress and emotion that an unplanned pregnancy can elicit. If we prohibit a 14-year old from driving a car or buying cigarettes, how can we justify allowing her to kill her child?

The support of professional organizations does not accurately reflect the views of its members

We are aware of statements supporting this bill from medical organizations across Minnesota (the MMA, MAFP, and Minnesota chapters of the ACP, AAP, ACOG, MMA). Many of these statements claim to speak on behalf of all of the physicians and students in their

organization, but many of us are members of one or more of these organizations and were never asked for our stance on the issue. These all-encompassing statements of support are egregious misrepresentations of the beliefs and opinions of individual Minnesota physicians.

We sincerely implore those involved to abstain from passing such broad and sweeping legislation that is antithetical to a physician's true responsibilities, would undermine the value of human life, and misrepresents the views of individual Minnesota physicians.

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