

Regular Session, 2007

HOUSE BILL NO. 25

BY REPRESENTATIVE CROWE

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

ABORTION: Provides relative to a Woman's Right to Know

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 40:1299.35.6(C)(1)(a) and to enact R.S. 40:1299.35.6(A)(5)(d)
3 and (B)(1)(g), relative to the performance of abortions; to provide for informed
4 consent requirements; to provide for publication of materials by the Department of
5 Health and Hospitals; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 40:1299.35.6(C)(1)(a) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
8 40:1299.35.6(A)(5)(d) and (B)(1)(g) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §1299.35.6. Woman's Right To Know

10 A. Legislative findings and purposes. The Legislature of Louisiana finds
11 that:

12 * * *

13 (5) Based on the above findings, it is the purpose of this Act to:

14 * * *

15 (d) Ensure that every woman considering an abortion receive complete
16 information regarding the availability of anesthetic or analgesic that would eliminate
17 or alleviate organic pain to the unborn child that could be caused by the particular
18 method of abortion to be employed.

19 B. Informed consent; requirements. After a woman is determined to be
20 pregnant, no abortion shall be performed or induced without the voluntary and

1 informed consent of the woman upon whom the abortion is to be performed or
2 induced. Except in the case of a medical emergency, consent to an abortion is
3 voluntary and informed if and only if:

4 (1) At least twenty-four hours before the abortion, the physician who is to
5 perform the abortion or the referring physician has informed the woman, orally and
6 in person, of:

7 * * *

8 (g) The availability of anesthesia or analgesics to alleviate or eliminate
9 organic pain to the unborn child that could be caused by the method of abortion to
10 be employed.

11 * * *

12 C.(1) Publication of materials. The Department of Health and Hospitals
13 shall cause to be published in English, within ninety days after June 20, 1995, and
14 shall update on an annual basis, the following easily comprehensible printed
15 materials:

16 (a) Geographically indexed materials designed to inform the woman of
17 public and private agencies and services available to assist a woman through
18 pregnancy, upon childbirth, and while her child is dependent, including but not
19 limited to adoption agencies. The materials shall include a comprehensive list of the
20 agencies, a description of the services they offer, and the telephone number and
21 addresses of the agencies, and inform the woman about available medical assistance
22 benefits for prenatal care, childbirth, and neonatal care, and about the support
23 obligations of the father of a child who is born alive. The department shall ensure
24 that the materials described in this Section are comprehensive and do not directly or
25 indirectly promote, exclude, or discourage the use of any agency or service described
26 in this Section. The materials shall also contain a toll-free, all-hours-a-day telephone
27 number which may be called to obtain orally such a list and description of agencies
28 in the locality of the caller and of the services they offer. Such toll-free telephone
29 number shall be funded by the Department of Health and Hospitals. The materials

1 shall state that it is unlawful for any individual to coerce a woman to undergo an
2 abortion, that any physician who performs an abortion upon a woman without her
3 informed consent may be liable to her for damages in a civil action at law, and that
4 the law permits adoptive parents to pay costs of prenatal care, childbirth, and
5 neonatal care. The materials shall include the following ~~statement~~ statements:

6 (i) "There are many public and private agencies willing and able to help you
7 to carry your child to term, and to assist you and your child after your child is born,
8 whether you choose to keep your child or to place her or him for adoption. The state
9 of Louisiana strongly urges you to contact them before making a final decision about
10 abortion. The law requires that your physician or his agent give you the opportunity
11 to call agencies like these before you undergo an abortion."

12 (ii) "By twenty weeks gestation, the unborn child has the physical structures
13 necessary to experience pain. There is evidence that by twenty weeks gestation
14 unborn children seek to evade certain stimuli in a manner which in an infant or an
15 adult would be interpreted to be a response to pain. Anesthesia is routinely
16 administered to unborn children who are twenty weeks gestational age or older who
17 undergo prenatal surgery."

18 * * *

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument.

Crowe

HB No. 25

Abstract: Requires the inclusion of information related to fetal pain as a requirement to informed consent prior to performance of an abortion.

Proposed law requires that, at least 24 hours before the abortion, the physician who will perform the abortion inform the woman, orally and in person, of the availability of anesthesia or analgesics to alleviate or eliminate organic pain to the unborn child that could be caused by the method of abortion to be employed.

Proposed law mandates that DHH publish, in English, printed materials that contain the following statement:

"By 20 weeks gestation, the unborn child has the physical structures necessary to experience pain. There is evidence that by 20 weeks gestation unborn children seek to evade certain stimuli in a manner which in an infant or an adult would be interpreted to be a response to

pain. Anesthesia is routinely administered to unborn children who are 20 weeks gestational age or older who undergo prenatal surgery."

(Amends R.S. 40:1299.35.6(C)(1)(a); Adds R.S. 40:1299.35.6(A)(5)(d) and (B)(1)(g))