
DIGEST

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HB No. 1262

Abstract: Provides for information on psychological impacts, illegal coercion, abuse, and human trafficking to be delivered to women and minor females prior to abortion.

Present law provides that after a woman is determined to be pregnant, no abortion shall be performed or induced without the woman's voluntary and informed consent. Proposed law retains present law and adds requirements and conditions for consent to an abortion to be deemed voluntary and informed.

Present law provides that at least 24 hours before an abortion, the woman shall be given a copy of certain printed materials described in the Woman's Right To Know law (R.S. 40:1299.35.6 of present law) by the physician who is to perform the abortion, the referring physician, or a qualified person as defined in present law. Proposed law retains present law and adds thereto a requirement that DHH mark each copy of a printed item it creates and provides pursuant to present law with a unique identifier printed on three segments that are perforated and can be torn easily from the printed item. Proposed law provides further that when the physician or other qualified person conveys the pamphlet or other printed item to a woman or minor female considering an abortion, he shall remove two segments bearing the unique identifier and dispense with those segments as follows:

- (1) He shall place one segment bearing the unique identifier in the medical record of the woman along with all other documentation required by present law, R.S. 40:1299.35.8.
- (2) He shall submit one segment bearing the unique identifier to DHH within 30 days after the date of the abortion along with all other documentation required by present law R.S. 40:1299.35.10.

Proposed law authorizes DHH to produce copies of the materials described in present law that do not bear unique identifiers. Provides that such materials lacking unique identifiers may be distributed to persons other than women and minor females who are required to receive the materials by present law, and to and to have certification of receipt of the materials included in their medical records.

Proposed law provides a declaration indicating that women of this state have a right to know that undergoing an abortion may have serious psychological impacts, including severe emotional distress and mental and behavioral health afflictions.

Proposed law provides that at least 24 hours prior to undergoing an elective abortion, the woman or minor female considering abortion shall be given a copy of the printed materials on psychological impacts, illegal coercion, abuse, and human trafficking described in proposed law. Proposed law stipulates that provision of these materials is a condition for the woman's or minor female's consent to the abortion to be deemed voluntary and informed.

Proposed law requires that the physician or qualified person, as defined in present law, shall provide to the woman or minor female seeking an abortion the materials required by proposed law individually and in a private room for the purpose of ensuring that she has an adequate opportunity to ask questions and discuss her individual circumstances.

Proposed law requires that the physician or qualified person obtain the signature of the woman or minor female certifying that the printed materials were given to the her.

Proposed law provides that in the case of a minor female considering an abortion, if a parent accompanies the minor female to the appointment with the physician or qualified person, then the physician or qualified person shall provide to the parent copies of the materials that were given to the female in accordance with proposed law.

Proposed law requires DHH to create printed materials and printable Internet-based resources that provide information on mental, emotional, and behavioral health impacts prior to abortion; mental, emotional, and behavioral health impacts after abortion; coerced abortion; and human trafficking. Stipulates that provision of all materials described in proposed law prior to abortion is a condition for the woman's or minor female's consent to the abortion to be deemed voluntary and informed. Provides that the materials resources shall include the following:

- (1) Information, telephone numbers, and links to Internet websites of nonprofit organizations that offer free and confidential access to mental health professionals, social workers, and other trained counselors who serve women and minor females who may experience psychological distress or other mental, emotional, or behavioral health afflictions before an abortion.
- (2) Information, telephone numbers, and links to Internet websites of nonprofit organizations that offer free and confidential access to mental health professionals, social workers, and other trained counselors who serve women and minor females who may experience psychological distress or other mental, emotional, or behavioral health afflictions after undergoing an abortion.
- (3) Information, telephone numbers, and links to Internet websites of nonprofit organizations that offer free and confidential access to mental health professionals, social workers, and other trained counselors who are trained in counseling women and minor females who experience coercion to obtain an abortion concerning the psychological impacts or other mental, emotional, or behavioral health afflictions that may result from experiencing a coerced abortion. Proposed law requires that such materials clearly indicate that coerced abortion is defined in present law as a form of abuse that seriously endangers the

physical, mental, and emotional health and safety of a child.

- (4) Information, telephone numbers, and links to Internet websites of nonprofit organizations that offer free and confidential access to mental health professionals, social workers, and other trained counselors for women and minor females who are victims of the crime of human trafficking or the crime of trafficking of children for sexual purposes. Proposed law requires that such materials clearly indicate all of the following:
- (a) That victims of human trafficking can be safe after their rescue from being trafficked.
 - (b) That Louisiana provides by law for assistance to victims of human trafficking.
 - (c) That there are public and private agencies providing valuable assistance to women and girls who have been commercially and sexually exploited; and that help available to victims of trafficking and other exploitation includes housing assistance, education, job training, and drug addiction counseling.
 - (d) That legal assistance is available to women and girls seeking to escape the sex trade, including assistance in vacating prior prostitution convictions.
 - (e) That the crime of trafficking of children for sexual purposes is subject to the mandatory reporting requirements set forth in present law.

Proposed law provides that any pamphlet concerning human trafficking developed pursuant to proposed law shall be known as the "Point of Rescue" pamphlet.

Proposed law requires DHH to ensure that any mental or behavioral health professional or other counselor to whom a woman or minor female may be referred through the organizations listed in the materials developed pursuant to proposed law meets all of the following criteria:

- (1) Provides counseling services that objectively address the mental, emotional, and behavioral health effects that may result prior to abortion, after abortion, pursuant to coerced abortion, and from human trafficking.
- (2) Is not affiliated with an abortion provider.

Proposed law requires that each copy of a pamphlet or other printed item created pursuant to proposed law shall be marked with a unique identifier printed on three segments that are perforated and can be torn easily from the pamphlet or other printed item. Requires further that when the physician or other qualified person conveys the pamphlet or other printed item to a woman or minor female considering an abortion, he shall remove two segments bearing the unique identifier and dispense with those segments as follows:

- (1) He shall place one segment bearing the unique identifier in the medical record of the

woman along with all other documentation required by present law, R.S. 40:1299.35.8.

- (2) He shall submit one segment bearing the unique identifier to DHH within 30 days after the date of the abortion along with all other documentation required by present law R.S. 40:1299.35.10.

Proposed law authorizes DHH to produce copies of the materials described in proposed law that do not bear unique identifiers. Provides that such materials lacking unique identifiers may be distributed to persons other than women and minor females who are required to receive the materials by proposed law, and to and to have certification of receipt of the materials included in their medical records.

Proposed law provides that the governor shall convene a 14-member task force to assist DHH in the preparation of the printed and Internet materials provided for in proposed law. Provides that the task force shall be comprised of the following members:

- (1) One psychologist licensed by the La. State Board of Examiners of Psychologists.
- (2) One physician who is board certified as a psychiatrist and licensed by the La. State Board of Medical Examiners.
- (3) One licensed clinical social worker licensed by the La. State Board of Social Work Examiners.
- (4) Two La. residents who provide pre-abortion or post-abortion counseling in association with a nonprofit organization that does not counsel for or provide abortion.
- (5) Two attorneys licensed in La. who specialize in advocacy for women and minor females who are at risk of being coerced into or psychologically harmed by abortion.
- (6) The executive director of the La. Human Trafficking Task Force.
- (7) The executive director and the residential director of a residential program for women who have been commercially and sexually exploited.
- (8) Two members of the Senate appointed by the president.
- (9) Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker.
- (10) The secretary of DHH, who shall serve as the chairperson of the task force.

Proposed law stipulates that nothing therein shall be construed to conflict with or supercede the requirement for mandatory reporting of child abuse provided in Ch.C. Art. 609 of present law.

Present law, R.S. 40:1299.35.8, requires each physician who performs an abortion to retain and

make part of the medical record of each pregnant woman upon whom an abortion is performed or induced copies of certain forms, certificates, and other documents. Proposed law retains present law and adds the following to the enumerated list of items to be retained and made part of the medical record:

- (1) The signed certification form provided for in proposed law indicating that the woman acknowledged receipt of the informational materials concerning psychological impacts, illegal coercion, abuse, and human trafficking.
- (2) The segments bearing the unique identifiers of the pamphlets and other printed items conveyed to a woman or minor female prior to the abortion procedure addressing psychological impacts, illegal coercion, abuse, and human trafficking as required in proposed law.

Present law, R.S. 40:1299.35.10, requires each physician who performs an abortion to submit to DHH, within 30 days of the date of the abortion, a report encompassing de-identified health and demographic data on the woman upon whom the abortion was performed, along with certain other forms and documents. Proposed law retains present law and adds the following to the enumerated list of items to be included in the report to DHH:

- (1) The signed certification form provided for in proposed law indicating that the woman acknowledged receipt of the informational materials concerning psychological impacts, illegal coercion, abuse, and human trafficking.
- (2) The segments bearing the unique identifiers of the pamphlets and other printed items conveyed to a woman or minor female prior to the abortion procedure addressing psychological impacts, illegal coercion, abuse, and human trafficking as required in proposed law.

(Amends R.S. 40:1299.35.6(B)(5); Adds R.S. 40:1299.35.5.2, 1299.35.8(A)(6) and (7), and 1299.35.10(A)(27) and (28))