



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on June 11, 2012

## Louisiana Governor Signs Pair of Pro-Life Bills

Louisiana confirmed its reputation as America's most pro-life state June 7 as [Governor Bobby Jindal](#) signed two bills into law that will further protect unborn babies and their mothers. "These new laws will help us foster a greater culture of life in Louisiana and ensure that we continue to protect the weakest and most vulnerable among us," [said the Governor](#) upon signing S.B. 330 and S.B. 708, known as the Hear the Heartbeat Act.



Sponsored in the Senate by Democrat Sharon Weston Broome and in the House by Republican Valarie Hodges, S.B. 708, drafted by the pro-life [Bioethics Defense Fund](#) and aggressively supported by the [Louisiana Right to Life Federation](#), will require abortion facilities to allow a mother to hear the beating heart of her unborn baby at least 24 hours prior to ending the baby's life, unless she signs an opt-out form. Additionally, the law will require an abortionist to place an ultrasound screen in view of the mother as he performs the ultrasound procedure, thus giving the mother an opportunity to view her pre-born baby if she wishes.

Benjamin Clapper, executive director of Louisiana Right to Life, said he was thrilled with the passage of the Hear the Heartbeat bill, noting that it "gives an otherwise voiceless child a voice through the playing of their heartbeat.... With the heartbeat and ultrasound provisions in the Hear the Heartbeat Act soon becoming law, women will be empowered with more medical knowledge regarding their pregnancies within abortion facilities that have a financial interest in squelching this information."

Mary Spalding Balch, director of state legislation for [National Right to Life](#) (NRTL), said that the ultrasound element in S.B. 708 gives teeth to Louisiana's "[ultrasound before abortion](#)" law passed in 2010. "In practice, an ultrasound law that does not ensure that the ultrasound is displayed can become almost meaningless because virtually every abortion facility will slip a waiver form into the stack of papers mothers are asked to sign," noted Spaulding. She said that S.B. 708 protects women "considering abortion from being deprived of the full information they should have before making such life changing decisions by such practice."

Balch applauded the state legislature and Louisiana Right to Life "for their hard work in ensuring that the abortionist must display the ultrasound image of the unborn child for the mother. Today, their tireless efforts have paid off, and we are so pleased by this success."

S.B. 330, also signed into law by Governor Jindal, requires that abortions may be performed only by licensed physicians, and creates a crime of aggravated criminal abortion by dismemberment when an unborn child is dismembered via an unlawful abortion procedure. The Louisiana Senate passed the bill on a 37 to 0 vote on April 30, with the House approving the measure 99 to 0 a month later.

Clapper told the [Christian Post](#) that the new pro-life laws in his state "further protect the lives of unborn children and women from an abortion industry that has a financial interest in women choosing abortion. The real war on women is found in an industry that wants to disguise the emotional and



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physical risks of abortion in a so-called liberating choice.”

Also on its way to Governor Jindal’s desk is S.B. 766, the “Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act,” which unanimously passed both state legislative bodies and was due in early June for a concurrence vote in the Senate before being passed on to the Governor. “Upon the signing of this bill by Governor Jindal, unborn children will be spared from the pain of abortion and given the gift of life,” Clapper said of the bill, which has already been instituted in other states. “Based on Louisiana statistics, we believe through a conservative estimate that at least 150 lives will be saved annually from abortion.”

NRTL, which has helped with passage of the “Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection” bill in other states, explained that the protection the bill affords is based on substantial medical evidence demonstrating that pre-born babies are capable of feeling pain from at least 20 weeks from fertilization. “Louisiana has a vested interest in protecting unborn children who can feel pain from the violence of abortion,” said NRTL’s Mary Spaulding Balch. “Modern medical science provides substantial compelling evidence that unborn children recoil from painful stimuli, that their stress hormones increase when they are subjected to any painful stimuli, and that they require anesthesia for fetal surgery.”

With Jindal’s signature Louisiana will become the seventh state to pass a version of the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, joining Nebraska, Idaho, Kansas, Oklahoma, Alabama, and Georgia.

Over the past four years in office, Governor Bobby Jindal has gained a nationwide reputation for his pro-life stand. “Since becoming governor, several pieces of legislation surrounding ‘life issues’ have been made into law,” the *Christian Post* noted. “Under Jindal, Louisiana mandated that a minor seeking an abortion have the consent of at least one parent and that no state funding could go to human cloning.”

This year [Americans United for Life](#) ranked Louisiana No. 1 on its list of the nation’s most pro-life states.

*Photos above (left to right): Sen. Sharon Weston Broome; Gov. Bobby Jindal; Rep. Valerie Hodges*



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