



## Florida Bans Abortions After 15 Weeks

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed a bill Thursday that prohibits physicians from performing abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

[H.B. 5](#), or “Reducing Fetal and Infant Mortality,” allows only two exceptions to the ban.

In the first case, two doctors must certify that the pregnancy may be terminated after a 15-week period if there is a medical necessity to save the woman’s life or avert a serious risk of “imminent substantial and irreversible physical damage of a major bodily function” of the pregnant woman. Any psychological conditions that a woman claims she might suffer if her pregnancy were not terminated will not be considered as a legitimate reason to perform an abortion. If two physicians are not available, the bill says that one doctor may sign such a waiver. Still, the doctor will be obligated to determine the gestational age of the fetus by ultrasound.

In the second case, the pregnancy may be terminated if two physicians certify that the fetus has a fatal abnormality.

Prior to the new law, Florida allowed abortions until 24 weeks of gestation.

The previous law required abortion providers to report abortions due to rape or incest. The new provision of the bill adds a requirement to report whether abortions were performed due to human trafficking. The latter does not qualify as an exception to the 15-week cut-off.

Besides reducing the point during the pregnancy when abortion can be legally terminated, the bill addresses broader issues of fetal and infant mortality reduction related to fetal and infant mortality reviews (FIMR), hospital quality initiatives, and statewide tobacco education and use prevention.

[According](#) to the information posted on the governor’s website, each FIMR committee is now required to:

- Review and analyze rates, trends, causes, and other data related to fetal and infant mortality and morbidity in its geographic area.
- Develop findings and recommendations for interventions and policy changes to reduce fetal and infant mortality and morbidity rates.
- Engage with local communities and stakeholders to implement recommended policies and procedures to reduce fetal and infant mortality and morbidity.



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The legislation earmarks \$1,602,000 in recurring funds to the Department of Health (DOH) to meet the requirements.

The law takes effect on July 1, 2022.

DeSantis issued the following statement on the matter:

House Bill 5 protects babies in the womb who have beating hearts, who can move, who can taste, who can see, and who can feel pain.... Life is a sacred gift worthy of our protection, and I am proud to sign this great piece of legislation which represents the most significant protections for life in the state's modern history.

[Speaking](#) at the signing ceremony at Nación De Fe church in Kissimmee, Florida, the governor noted how developed a baby is at 15 weeks of gestation: "This is a time where these babies have beating hearts, they can move, they can taste, they can see, they can feel pain, they can suck their thumbs, and they have brain waves."

Pro-abortion advocates such as Planned Parenthood [claimed](#) the "cruel and careless" law would harm "marginalized communities," including Black and Latino residents who will be forced to travel out of state to abort their unborn children. The other category that the abortionists worry about are illegal immigrants, who are ineligible for "public health coverage" and may be unable to travel out of state out of fear of immigration enforcement.

"We've entered a dangerous time for Floridians' reproductive freedom. In just a few months, thousands of pregnant people in Florida will no longer be able to access the care they need without leaving their state," said Planned Parenthood President Alexis McGill Johnson in a statement. "The supporters of this bill have put their own political ambitions and beliefs before the health and futures of their constituents."

Other Planned Parenthood representatives criticized the law for being "unscientific," "unconstitutional," and uncompassionate.

Pro-life groups, on the other hand, say the law does not go far enough to protect the pre-born.

Live Action News [posted](#),

While any abortion restriction is a pro-life win, Florida legislators had the opportunity to introduce a bill similar to the Texas Heartbeat Act that would have restricted abortion upon detectable heartbeat and saved thousands of more lives. In fact, the legislators behind the bill admitted that by restricting abortion to 15 weeks, they were "not banning anything" and "not taking away a woman's opportunity."

The group added that both of the exemptions provided in the bill are not medically justified.

Speaking about abortion as a prerequisite to saving a mother's life, the organization said that abortion is "never medically necessary." If mom's life is in danger, it usually takes less than an hour to perform an emergency C-section, which would save the child's life.

As for the "fatal fetal abnormality" diagnosis, it is noted that abortion is "not a treatment for a disability or health condition." The mindset that allows for the abortion of the sick is purely eugenicist. There are numerous instances when medics were able to save the lives of such children. Moreover, studies



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suggest that the emotional and psychological well-being of mothers who choose to carry sick babies to term is much better than that of those who do not.



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