



Governor Fallin Vetoes Pro-life Bill, Gets Prominent GOP Position

It is said that politics makes strange bedfellows. Recent events in Oklahoma seem to prove that adage. Governor Mary Fallin (shown) — having just days ago vetoed a bill that would protect the lives of the unborn in the Sooner State — has been appointed to one of the most prominent positions in her party. The woman who squandered a golden opportunity to stand for one of the chief planks of the GOP platform will now serve as as co-chair of the 2016 Republican National Convention Committee on Resolutions, commonly known as the Platform Committee.



The announcement — in the form of a press release from the GOP — came Tuesday just after noon and reads in part:

Today Republican National Committee (RNC) Chairman Reince Priebus announced the leadership of the 2016 Republican National Convention Committee on Resolutions, commonly known as the Platform Committee.

Senator John Barrasso of Wyoming will serve as Chairman of the Committee. Governor Mary Fallin of Oklahoma and Congresswoman Virginia Foxx of North Carolina will serve as Co-Chairs.

And:

“It is my privilege to be serving on this Committee,” said Co-Chair Fallin. “We are going to honor the will of Republican voters everywhere and write a platform that articulates the solutions America needs after eight years of a sputtering economy, more debt, out of control government, and a foreign policy of leading from behind.”

While such an announcement would usually be greeted with a sense of state pride, many in Oklahoma are unable to muster much in the way of anything positive. Governor Fallin’s office informed several conservative members of her own party in the state legislature on Monday that she was “too busy working on the budget to discuss” the revisions they were willing to propose to anti-abortion bill S.B. 1552, which she had just days before vetoed, saying it was too vague and would not stand up constitutionally.

As *The New American* [reported](#) previously:

Regarding Governor Fallin’s assertion of the ineffectiveness of this bill, one wonders why she chose



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on May 24, 2016

to outright veto it, instead of proposing changes to make it more acceptable. In fact, not only did she not propose any changes, she refused to discuss suggested changes that were brought to her.

Blair took the bill and Governor Fallin's press release to Liberty Counsel to seek advice on its vagueness. He was told by the legal team that it was not vague; however, they revised the wording to make it possibly more palatable to the governor. Blair then took the revision to Senator [Nathan] Dahm [the senate author of the bill], Representative David Brumbaugh [author of the house version of the bill], Representative Dan Fisher, Senator Joseph Silk, and others, who then tried repeatedly on Monday to contact Governor Fallin, only to be told by her office that she was "too busy working on the budget to discuss the bill."

As *The New American* also [reported](#), S.B. 1552 would have essentially ended abortion in Oklahoma:

According to the official website of Oklahoma's state legislature, SB 1552 would consider abortion "unprofessional conduct," and would revoke or prohibit the licensing, or renewal of a license, to doctors performing the procedure. It could also result in a punishment of up to three years in prison for those doctors who choose not to comply.

Fallin, who had known about the bill from the beginning and pledged to support it, instead surprised everyone by vetoing the bill on Friday — only one day after it was overwhelmingly passed by the state legislature. As mentioned above, she claimed that the bill was vague and that "doctors cannot be certain what medical circumstances would be considered 'necessary to preserve the life of the mother.'" What Fallin's statement ignored is that renowned attorneys had said that the bill was *not* vague and at least one of them had agreed to defend the bill for *free* if it were challenged. As we said then:

However, in a shocking turn of events, the state's self proclaimed pro-life governor vetoed the measure, claiming that it was unclear and lacked the ability to effectively end abortion. "The bill is so ambiguous and vague that doctors cannot be certain what medical circumstances would be considered 'necessary to preserve the life of the mother,'" Fallin said in a statement. She added that she instead supports a "re-examination" of *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision of the Supreme Court allowing women the "right" to an abortion. "In fact," said Fallin, "the most direct path to a re-examination of the United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade* is the appointment of a conservative, pro-life justice to the United States Supreme Court."

As perplexing as it is to the general public that a "pro-life" governor dismissed the opportunity to, for the most part, end abortion in her state, it is even more perplexing to a smaller segment of Oklahoma's population that was convinced of her approval. Governor Fallin was not only made aware of the intent of this bill in October of last year, but was also in favor of it at the time. A statement released by Protect Life and Marriage OK reveals,

[A nationally renowned attorney], along with a group of pastors and legislators, met personally with Fallin last year in an hour long meeting in her board room at 10 am on October 8, 2015. The meeting was a success as the purpose was to inform the governor of this strategy and secure her promised support if the bill got to her desk.

One of that "group of pastors" was Paul Blair, who is the founder of Protect Life and Marriage OK. Blair is also a candidate for the Oklahoma State Senate. In an exclusive interview with *The New American*, Blair expressed his dismay over not only Fallin's veto but also her unwillingness to dialogue with those members of her own party about her concerns. He also questioned "the timing of this appointment," saying:



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We have no idea why the Governor, for the first time as Governor, vetoed a pro-life bill, but the timing of this appointment makes you wonder. Under her leadership, our state refused to enact strong pro-life legislation. The current Republican platform is strongly pro-life and pro-family. Is Governor Fallin's appointment a sign that those values are changing?

One thing is clear about the governor's priorities: Her elevation to a prominent position in the party is of greater importance to her than is protecting the lives of unborn Sooners. And one is left to wonder if Fallin was meeting with party leaders — either in person or by phone — when she was “too busy working on the budget to discuss the bill.” While the selection process for the “pro-life” Platform Committee had obviously been going on for some time, and it is not likely that this is a direct quid pro quo, where there is smoke, there is usually fire.

That the very woman who refused to stand up for a bill representing one of the major planks in the GOP's party platform could then say, “We are going to honor the will of Republican voters everywhere and write a platform that articulates the solutions America needs,” should give not only Oklahomans, but all Republicans, cause for concern.

Considering that *Rolling Stone* reported on May 20 that the first new abortion clinic since 1974 in the state plans to open in Oklahoma City next month, Fallin's lack of moral conviction in refusing to stand by S.B. 1552 may not only allow abortion in the state to continue, it may actually allow it to increase exponentially.

As state legislators consider their options for overriding Fallin's veto, perhaps they should consider that they will likely drive right past that new abortion clinic if they don't. As Michael Sawyer, Oklahoma field coordinator for The John Birch Society — a constitutionalist organization well known for its pro-life stance, and the parent organization of this magazine — told *The New American*, “This is a perfect storm for ending abortion in Oklahoma. Any legislator who wants to be seen as truly pro-life has a golden opportunity by overriding Governor Fallin's veto. Those who don't will be telling us all something about themselves.”

Those legislators have an opportunity to stand where Fallin fell. As Protect Life and Marriage OK's motto says, “Legally, we can. Morally, we must.” Here's hoping the state legislature is listening. Because Governor Mary Fallin certainly isn't.

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