

Roe v. Wade: What Would Obama Do?

Thirty-six years after the 1973 landmark case made abortion-on-demand legal, many Christians worry President Barack Obama will turn back the clock on years of progress made by the pro-life movement.

✖ **Jan. 22, 2009** – As tens of thousands of Americans descended on the National Mall for today's March for Life, the 35th annual protest of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision, pro-life groups expressed concern that President Barack Obama will use his power to strengthen the abortion industry worldwide.

"Today is the 36th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, and abortions here in the U.S. are at their lowest number in years," said Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the pro-life group Susan B. Anthony List (SBA List). "So it's unfortunate that President Obama is poised to make subsidizing abortion abroad one of his first priorities. I strongly urge President Obama to reconsider his decision to bypass the will of American taxpayers and promote the radical agenda of the abortion lobby."

Obama could act as soon as today to pass or overturn abortion-related legislation, including the Mexico City Policy, which currently bans U.S. funding to "family planning" groups promoting or performing abortions abroad.

Pro-life activists worry Obama will appoint liberal federal judges who support *Roe v. Wade* and also fear he might revoke the "right of conscience" regulation passed by former President Bush last month, which allows medical staff to refuse to participate in abortion practices that they object to on moral grounds.

Yesterday, a group called 40 Days for Life launched a 40-day prayer and fasting campaign to end abortion. Participants in more than 100 U.S. cities will gather each day for peaceful vigils outside abortion centers and Planned Parenthood offices.

David Bereit, national campaign director of 40 Days for Life, also endorsed Organized for Life, a pro-life initiative launched today that sends volunteers door to door across the U.S. to localize national opposition to abortion.

Organized for Life leaders said knocking on doors brings crisis pregnancy outreach into homes while also galvanizing neighborhoods nationwide to send a message to Washington that “a critical mass” of Americans “cares about unborn babies.”

Since running for president, Obama has not been completely transparent regarding his views on abortion. He received strong criticism from the pro-life community last March when he told a crowd that he wouldn’t want his daughters “punished with a baby” for making a sexual mistake.

Last summer Obama told Saddleback Church pastor Rick Warren before a crowd of evangelicals that it was above his pay grade to know at exactly what moment life begins. The following day Warren told God-o-Meter, a forum at , that Obama’s response wasn’t good enough.

“I think he needed to be more specific on that,” Warren said. “I happen to disagree with Barack on that. [To] me, I would not want to die and get before God one day and go, ‘Oh, sorry, I didn’t take the time to figure [it] out,’ because if I was wrong then it had severe implications to my leadership if I had the ability to do something about it.

“To just say ‘I don’t know’ on the most divisive issue in America is not a clear enough answer for me.”

Warren delivered the invocation at Obama’s inauguration

Tuesday. He did not mention abortion, but asked God to bestow wisdom, courage and compassion on the new president.

According to a statement posted under the "Reproductive Choice" section of the White House's new Web site, Obama "has been a consistent champion of reproductive choice and will make preserving women's rights under *Roe v. Wade* a priority in his administration. He opposes any constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court's decision in that case."

Following Obama's win in November leaders from dozens of pro-abortion groups in the U.S., including Planned Parenthood, NARAL, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Sierra Club, signed a 55-page manifesto titled "Advancing Reproductive Rights and Health in a New Administration."

The ambitious \$1.5 billion plan, which outlined 15 priorities for Obama's first 100 days in office, was dubbed by the SBA List as the "Abortion Industry Bailout."

"To date, [pro-life] activists have sent over 72,000 letters to U.S. senators in opposition to the abortion bailout," SBA List political director Joy Yearout told *Charisma* Wednesday. "Preserving the long-standing Hyde Amendment, which prevents abortion funding through Medicaid, will be [our] top priority."

Dannenfelser was on Capitol Hill Wednesday morning meeting with pro-life senators and sharing the importance of stopping the abortion bailout.

She told *Charisma* that abortion groups such as Planned Parenthood, which she said posted revenues in excess of \$1 billion in 2007, with roughly one-third from government funding, are demanding a piece of Congress' multi-billion dollar bailout plan. "Taxpayer funding of abortion is certain to be the first big battle," she said. "Fortunately, public opinion is on our side. [The] majority of Americans oppose taxpayer funding for abortion." **—Paul Steven Ghiringhelli**

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