

Abort Abortion

✖ Last week, Sen. Dick Durbin, D-IL, made comments that should have won him an award for the most racially insensitive remarks of the year. His statements were made in a committee markup. An audio recording of the heated exchange between Durbin, and Sen. Brownback, R-KS, revealed the unfortunate bias of the senator from Illinois. Durbin justified the fact that 41 percent of pregnancies in Washington D.C. are terminated by abortion by essentially saying it was a black thing. His exact words are listed below:

Durbin: In terms of safe, legal and rare, to the senator from Kansas, I will tell you two things. First, it is a fact that a disproportionately large number of African-Americans seek abortion in America, not just in the District of Columbia, but all across the nation.

Brownback: 41 percent?

Durbin: No, but it's also a fact that a disproportionately large number of African-Americans live in the District of Columbia.

Brownback: 41 percent?

Durbin: I'm telling you, look at the numbers.

Brownback: I'm telling – I'm just asking you, aren't there enough [abortions] here?

Durbin: Look at the numbers, and you will find this to be true.

Brownback: This – this is not high enough?

The problem with Durbin's flippant, patronizing remarks were, that they were classic statements of a bureaucrat who does not

care about the welfare of people in the District of Columbia.

Many concerned residents of D.C. believe that there is a culture of death in the city. According to the Guttmacher Institute, the rate of abortion in D.C. is twice the national average. In addition, D.C. also has the highest rate of HIV/AIDS cases in the nation. Although the city has shaken its 80s and 90s moniker as the murder capital of the world, there still needs to be special care given to the preservation of all human life – especially black life in the . As I listened to Durbin's remarks, I could not help but think that if there were more white or Hispanic fetuses aborted, he would have been more alarmed. Like other kinds of black-on-black crimes, there seemed to be no remorse on the side of the political power structure.

Brownback stated that before the federal ban against funding abortions was in place, D.C. shifted over \$1 million from an AIDS fund to an abortion fund. Brownback's amendment to preserve the ban on taxpayer-funded abortions in D.C. failed in committee, marking a low in the concern for life among those given oversight to the District's affairs.

Let's take a moment to trace the racial trends to which Durbin alluded. Let's see if his logic holds water. Blacks account for over a third of all abortions in the nation, though they represent 12 percent of the population. Nationally whites account for 58 percent of the abortions in the nation. This means that whites and other groups abort the remaining two-thirds of babies nationally. Roughly speaking, approximately 1500 black babies are aborted each day in the nation. This is compared to approximately 3,000 babies aborted each day by others.

Returning to D.C. statistics, the 2006 abortion numbers show that of the pregnancies ended by abortion, blacks decided to terminate 78 percent, while only 18.2 percent of the abortions were performed on white fetuses instead of the 26 percent

national proportionality equations would suggest. Many concerned Americans want to know why so many black babies die. A National Public Radio program, which aired on Nov. 11, 2007, showed that during the previous decade, Washington, D.C. had one of the highest rates of teen pregnancies in the nation. At the time of that report, the decadal teen pregnancy rate had dropped from one in six teenage girls pregnant in 1996, to one in 16 by 2007. On that program Brenda Rhodes Miller, executive director of the D.C. Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, talked about progress that had been made and the work still left to be done.

The D.C. Campaign To Prevent Teen Pregnancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in April 1999 as a result of the work of the Mayor's Committee on Reducing Teenage Pregnancies and Out-of-Wedlock Births. The leadership of this organization is comprised of many card-carrying Democrats. This means that lowering abortion rates can be a bipartisan effort. The board of directors of the D.C. Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy is composed of local and national community leaders who are committed to improving the lives and well being of teens. Current board members include former D.C. city council members and noteworthy citizens, including both ministers and secular leaders.

One can only wonder how much higher the abortion level in the District might be if there had not been a moratorium on funding abortions. D.C. is clearly in a precarious place concerning this issue. Other regions are taking important leadership steps that D.C. might follow. Arizona, for example, just passed legislation that includes guidelines for abortions: a one-day waiting period, parental notification for minors seeking abortion, and doctor's disclosure about the risks and alternatives.

All of us can make a difference in this emotionally charged debate. As citizens, we must continue to actively, boldly and compassionately work to reduce abortions. I believe it's

possible to decrease the number of abortions by 50 percent over the next 10 years.

In conclusion, Durbin got it all wrong. He is supporting and continuing a culture of death in the nation's capital. We, however, must abort abortion.

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