

North Carolina Requires Ultrasounds Before Abortion



AP Images/Martin Meissner

North Carolina pro-life supporters are celebrating as a new measure will be enforced to discourage women from getting abortions.

On Thursday the North Carolina Senate overrode Democratic Gov. Bev

Perdue's veto of a mandatory ultrasound bill in a 29 to 19 vote.

Doctors in the state will now be required to give an ultrasound to

women seeking an abortion before performing the procedure. They also

must describe the fetus in detail. Women will have to wait 24 hours

before being allowed to kill their baby.

According to Reuters, Elizabeth Nash, public policy associate with

Guttmacher Institute in Washington says North Carolina is joining "25

other U.S. states that require pre-abortion counseling that goes

beyond basic medical 'informed consent.'"

Nash also said it is the tenth state to include an ultrasound, an additional requirement.

"It's a historic vote," Barbara Holt, president of N.C. Right to Life, told the *Charlotte Observer*. "It's exciting to see it pass. It's what we've hoped for, worked for for so many years."

Perdue vetoed the bill on June 27, calling the legislation a “dangerous intrusion into the confidential relationship that exists between women and their doctors” in her veto message.

The primary sponsor of the bill, Republican Rep. Ruth Samuelson, says it is vital information for women who are making a major decision.

“If a 24-hour waiting period saves one life, I would hope that all of us here would likewise agree that any inconvenience to the doctor or patient [was] also worth it, and was insignificant,” Republican Sen. Warren Daniel said.

Although a woman will be free to look away and ignore an explanation and description of the image on the screen, law will require one be presented and the sound of the fetal heartbeat be offered.

The Center for Reproductive Rights is challenging similar laws in Oklahoma and Texas, and in the process of reviewing North Carolina’s law. According to *The News & Observer*, the organization claims that the law may violate the rights of patients “to avoid unwanted, government-mandated speech in the privacy of a medical office.”

“A law that requires a woman to cover her ears and hum, I really don’t view that as a right,” said Jordan Goldberg, the organization’s state advocacy counsel.