

Pushback: 2,500 Churches Respond to John Kasich's Abortion Bill Veto

It's very likely Ohio Gov. John Kasich didn't see this kind of reaction coming when he decided to veto a legislative bill that would have outlawed abortion once a fetal heartbeat is detected.

At a press conference held at the Ohio Statehouse on Thursday, a group of pastors urged Republicans to override the governor's veto. They said they represent "no less than 2,500 churches in the state of Ohio," and tens of thousands of registered voters who "care deeply about this issue."

"We would like to make a declaration and to challenge our legislators that we're going to stand with you. We're here, we're growing and we're not going anywhere," J.C. Church, senior pastor of Victory in Truth Ministries, said. "We're asking the Speaker of the House to call for a vote to override this decision that the governor has made, because we're here to promote and advocate for life."

"The lives of 60 million aborted babies compel as we consider the weight of this bill and what it can accomplish and the lives that it can save," Tim Throckmorton, senior pastor at Crossroads Church, added. "Let me suggest that the millions of unborn whose lives are in the balance plead with us that we continue to stand for life, that we continue to stand together."

The "heartbeat bill," as it has been called, was actually an amendment to a bill dealing with reporting child abuse and neglect, which made it easier for Kasich to remove with his line-item veto authority. A separate bill, which prohibits abortions after 20 weeks' gestation, was signed into law

instead.

That bill was supported by Ohio Right to Life and other abortion opponents, which did not support the fetal heartbeat language. Those seeking to abolish abortion entirely, however, have been vocal in their outrage, and they're mobilizing to put pressure on Republicans to override the veto.

The overall legislation was approved by a 56-39 vote in the Ohio House of Representatives, with only a few Republicans voting against it. Sixty votes are needed to overturn Kasich's veto, but time is running out—supporters have only until the end of the year to get an override vote.

A spokesman for Speaker of the House Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) said Republicans were reviewing their options. He did note the 20-week ban was an "important step forward in protecting life" but also noted many members of the caucus were angered by the "step back" Kasich's veto represented.

The bill's primary sponsor, Rep. Christina Hagan (R-Alliance), has vowed to push for an override:

"Our passion for the unborn will not cease because of one man's action," she said. "We will continue the fight for babies to experience the milestones which every human deserves.

"As my daughter took her first steps today, I thought how great it would be for every child with a beating heart to experience such joy. It is clear, albeit heart-wrenching today, that my work here has just begun and our fight as a movement continues." {eo}