

This State Could Become the 25th to Require a Key Means of Preventing Abortions

Ultrasounds save lives. The evidence is undeniable. And now, Idaho is on the verge of becoming the 25th state to add the life-saving procedure in an effort to prevent abortions.

The Idaho Senate approved House Bill 516 on a party-line vote Thursday, sending the bill to Gov. Butch Otter for his signature. The legislation does not require an ultrasound before an abortion is performed, but rather requires women considering abortions are provided a list of providers who will perform an ultrasound for free.

Bill sponsor Sen. Sheryl Nuxoll (R-Cottonwood) argued the legislation “does not limit choice. It just enhances choice. Ultrasounds are truly a window to the womb.”

The Idaho House of Representatives also adopted the legislation largely along party lines. Republicans control the House with a 56-14 majority and the Senate by a 28-7 majority. Democrats argued the bill limits “choice” for women, and that it violated “separation of Church and State.”

Ultrasounds prior to abortions are considered a sound medical practice because they verify the length of pregnancy, and can exclude the possibility of rare, but potentially life-threatening, health situations for the women, such as ectopic or tubal pregnancies. But unless it is required by law, most abortion providers do not allow the woman to see the ultrasound.

“They are never allowed to look at the ultrasound because we knew that if they so much as heard the heart beat, they wouldn’t want to have an abortion,” Dr. Joseph Randall, who

previously performed abortions, once said.

Likewise, the language used by abortion providers is oftentimes purposely evasive. Rather than use the word “baby,” they use phrases like “contents of the uterus” and “products of conception.” When women who have abortions later become pregnant and choose not to end their unborn child’s life, they are often confronted with the truth—and consequences—of their previous decisions when they see their first ultrasound.

Otter, a Catholic, has declared his pro-life views previously. When he served in Congress, he voted to ban federal funding of abortions and to ban partial-birth abortions. He also supports legislation that would require parental consent for minor girls seeking abortions.