

This State May Take a Unique Approach to Banning Abortion

Legislators in Oklahoma are seeking a unique approach to dealing with abortion in their state.

Senate Bill 1552, which has now passed in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, stipulates that the performance of an abortion by a physician will constitute unprofessional conduct. It also prohibits any physician who performs an abortion from obtaining or renewing a license to practice medicine.

“The State Board of Medical Licensure and Supervision and the State Board of Osteopathic Examiners must revoke the license of physicians performing an abortion,” the bill summary reads. “It modifies the definition of abortion to include an exception to preserve the life or health of the mother.”

Effectively, the bill would ban abortions without making the procedure itself illegal. It would further disincentivize the practice by stripping doctors of their licenses to practice medicine, if they are found to have performed an abortion that was not intended to “preserve the life or health of the mother.”

Gov. Mary Fallin, a Republican, now has the bill on her desk for her consideration. But she has made no indication as to how she will decide to proceed, either on the Governor’s Office website, or on social media. She faces enormous pressure, not only from Planned Parenthood and pro-abortion advocates, but also from the Oklahoma State Medical Association.

Republicans dominate both chambers of the legislature, so a veto override is certainly possible, should she decide not to sign the bill into law.