

Why Mississippi's Personhood Amendment Failed

Today, Mississippi voters have decided not to pass the Mississippi Personhood Amendment.

Personhood USA understands that changing a culture—and changing a country—will not happen with one election, and so it is not unexpected. We thank the over one-quarter of a million Mississippians who voted for Amendment 26. We vow to continue on this path toward affirming the basic dignity and human rights of all people because we are assured that it is the right thing to do, and we are prepared for a long journey.

Abortion is the greatest injustice of our day. Children are brutally dismembered and killed in their mother's womb at the rate of over 3,000 per day. Abortion clinics are strategically located across the country.

State by state, and election by election, we are taking critical steps toward defending the right to life of all human beings, every person, and ending the dangerous and deadly practice of abortion. The time has come for America to stop treating the unborn as property to be disposed of as we see fit. We are thankful that lives were saved and hearts were changed through the Yes on 26 campaign, and we are prepared to do it again in multiple states across the nation.

Personhood USA firmly believes that our campaign fell victim to the outright lies of our opposition, and because of their lies, children will continue to be murdered in Mississippi.

Amendment 26 enjoyed the widest, broadest base of support that this country has ever seen on a pro-life amendment. This alone demonstrates that the tide is turning in America. Politicians, doctors, nurses, lawyers, scientists and ethicists are fearless in standing for human life, and for the rights of all

people, regardless of age, race, development, gender, disability or location.

Our opposition's most successful tactics were steeped in falsehoods. Despite testimony from countless experts including the Mississippi Center for Public Policy, numerous high-profile attorneys, and board certified physicians and OBGYNs, Amendment 26 opponents falsely claimed that the measure would ban In Vitro Fertilization (it couldn't), ban contraception (it wouldn't) and give protections to "eggs" (it didn't).

In truth, Amendment 26 protected human embryos from the moment of conception.

However, Amendment 26 would do much more than that. Amendment 26 would protect all human beings by recognizing their personhood rights. Most abortion providers refuse to perform abortions until eight weeks—when the baby is clearly recognizable and has tiny fingers and toes, complete with a strong and steady heartbeat. Amendment 26 was for those living and growing babies, newly conceived. Amendment 26 was for the 3-week-old babies with beating hearts. Amendment 26 was for the 8-week-babies with fingers and toes. Amendment 26 was for those babies at 18 weeks, kicking their moms for the first time, at 26 weeks opening their eyes for the first time, and even in the third trimester, when abortion is still legal thanks to 1973's *Doe v. Bolton* decision.

Amendment 26 was for the mothers scarred by abortion. Abortion is permanent—you can never undo it. Amendment 26 was for fathers, sisters, brothers and grandparents who are all terribly affected by abortion, past or present.

A personhood amendment, recognizing everyone as a legal person, is the right thing to do. It is always right to protect our citizens. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The time is always right to do what is right."

We recognize that the right time to end abortion in

Mississippi is now, and that is why the citizens of Mississippi will attempt a personhood ballot measure again—and again, if necessary—until every person's life is protected.

Keith Mason is the president of Personhood USA, which is committed to seeing that every child is protected by love and by law in the United States. Personhood is a movement working to respect the God-given right to life by recognizing all human beings as persons who are “created in the image of God” from the beginning of their biological development, without exceptions.