

Florida Judge Grants Teen Appeal to Have Abortion Without Parental Consent

A Florida judge has granted a 17-year-old Tampa teenager her appeal to seek an abortion without parental consent.

The high school junior “lives with her father, who does not believe in abortion except in cases of rape. She believes that both of her parents would urge her to keep the baby if they found out that she wanted an abortion,” a court filing states.

Knowing her parents would likely not approve of her getting an abortion, the teenager—identified only as “Jane Doe”—applied for an exemption that would allow her to get information about medical abortion pills, according to WTVT-TV. Florida law mandates those under 18 years old have parental consent before discussing abortion pills with a medical doctor or taking them.

Rinky Parwani, the attorney representing the pregnant teenage girl, argued in court that his client works and pays for things she wants and needs, outside basic necessities, which are provided by her father. He went on to say the girl, who plans to enlist in the military before going to college to study nursing, is seeking an abortion because she is not yet financially stable.

“That is huge for these ladies that petition the court for this,” Parwani said. “They do have futures, they understand that having a child may limit those futures in different ways.”

What’s The Background?

The judge’s ruling this week comes after a court order

dismissed the teenager's initial petition for a judicial waiver.

The unnamed girl's petition was initially denied after the court found her to be of "less than average" intelligence. She claimed she was earning Bs in school, despite her grade-point average being 2.0.

"Clearly, a 'B' average would not equate to a 2.0 GPA," a court document stated. "Petitioner's testimony evinces either a lack of intelligence or credibility, either of which weighs against a finding of maturity pursuant to the statute."

Parwani, for his part, made the case that his client is of average intelligence and has plans for her future, intentions he argued would be thwarted by an unplanned pregnancy and early parenthood.

Ultimately, the judge sided with the teenager, stating in his decision that her "testimony demonstrates that she possesses an ability to assess the consequences of her choice and the risk it entails, as well as the intention to reassess her decision after consultation with her physician."

Her attorney said the judge made the "right decision."

"Any young teenage girl who is pregnant is already going through a huge emotional burden," he said. "What is really fundamental in this decision is the court understood that she had resources available to her to make the right decision."

The teenager told the court she will consult with her doctor and that, if she decides to pursue an abortion, her boyfriend will drive her to the clinic and her mother will pay for the termination.

The Supreme Court is expected to issue a ruling on *Dobbs* in June of this year.

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