

Fourth State Takes Major Pro-Life Step

North Carolina is poised to become the fourth state to require women to wait 72 hours between consulting a doctor and having an abortion after the state legislature gave final approval to the measure on Monday.

The state Senate approved the longer waiting period by a 32-16 vote, after the House passed the bill in April.

Both chambers of the Republican-led legislature passed the measure by a wide-enough margin to override a possible veto by Republican Governor Pat McCrory.

If the measure becomes law, North Carolina will join Missouri, South Dakota and Utah in requiring a 72-hour waiting period. A total of 24 states require some waiting period before an abortion can be performed, and several are considering new or longer restrictions this year.

McCrory said during his gubernatorial campaign that he would not sign any measures that restricted access to abortion, although he has since signed into law tighter regulations for abortion providers. He has not commented specifically on the current bill but said last week he planned to veto several bills now being considered in the legislature.

Supporters of the measure said it would allow women to weigh more information before ending a pregnancy.

"The poorest decisions that we make are the ones we make under pressure or compulsively," Representative Jacqueline Schaffer, a Republican, said during the House debate.

State Senator Angela Bryant, a Democrat, called the measure an effort to block women's access to reproductive healthcare.

“There’s no comparison to any other kind of healthcare situation in which we support government intrusion in this manner,” Bryant said.

© 2015 Thomson Reuters. All rights reserved.