

# Indiana House Passes Bill Aimed at Limiting Use of Abortion Pill

The Indiana House on Tuesday approved a bill requiring clinics that administer the so-called abortion pill to also have full surgical facilities, a move that would force Planned Parenthood to halt all abortion services at a central Indiana clinic.

Supporters say the bill protects women's health, but the president of **Planned Parenthood** of Indiana called the facility mandates for early-term abortions "regulation without reason."

The Senate has adopted a similar measure and would need to agree to some changes in wording before the bill is sent to Republican Gov. Mike Pence for his signature.

Under the bill, Planned Parenthood of Indiana would have to upgrade its clinic in Lafayette to surgical standards or stop administering RU-486 to end early-term pregnancy, President Betty Cockrum said.

Planned Parenthood of Indiana runs four of the 10 clinics in Indiana that offer abortion services, Cockrum said. The clinic in Lafayette does not perform surgical abortions and will stay open for other health services if the measure becomes law and takes effect in January 2014, she said.

"This is a very emotionally charged issue and I want you to understand that from the beginning my intent was to seek out a remedy to safeguard our young women who have chosen this path," said Republican state Rep. Sharon Negele, who sponsored the bill.

The two-pill **abortion medication** called RU-486 has been

legally available in the United States since 2000. By 2008 it accounted for about one-fourth of U.S. abortions performed before nine weeks of gestation, according to the Guttmacher Institute, a research group that supports the right to abortion.

As approved by the Food and Drug Administration, the drugs are dispensed by prescription directly from a physician. They are not available in pharmacies. The medication is generally prescribed for ending pregnancies of less than eight weeks.

Democratic state Rep. Linda Lawson, who opposed the bill, said there's "not one person in this room that is **pro-abortion**" and asked rhetorically why lawmakers did not talk more about birth control, education for young mothers or maternity leave.

Lawmakers in several states have proposed restrictions on abortion rights in the past two years, including laws approved in the last month in North Dakota and Arkansas that are seen as direct new challenges to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion in 1973.

North Dakota in late March became the first state to approve a ban on most abortions once a fetal heartbeat can be detected, about six weeks into pregnancy, and the first to ban abortions solely because of fetal genetic anomalies.

Before that, Arkansas banned most abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy.

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