

# No Death Penalty for Late-Term Abortionist Gosnell

A Philadelphia doctor avoided the possibility of the death penalty for murdering babies during **late-term abortions** by agreeing not to appeal his convictions, and he was sentenced on Tuesday to life in prison, the city prosecutor said.

Dr. Kermit Gosnell, 72, was convicted on Monday on three counts of first-degree murder, which raised the possibility of the **death penalty**. The case focused on whether the infants were born alive and then killed.

In the agreement that spared his life, Gosnell waived his right to appeal his convictions and was immediately sentenced to life in prison on two murder counts, Philadelphia District Attorney R. Seth Williams said in a statement.

Gosnell is due to be sentenced on Wednesday on his other convictions, including the murder of a third baby and the involuntary manslaughter of a patient who died after a late-term abortion, Williams said.

The seven-woman, five-man jury that found Gosnell guilty after 10 days of deliberations had been scheduled to return to court next Tuesday to decide if he would face the death penalty or life in prison.

Gosnell was accused of delivering live babies during **late-term** abortions and then severing their spinal cords at the now-shuttered Women's Medical Society Clinic. The facility served a predominantly black and low-income community in West Philadelphia.

The trial in Philadelphia Common Pleas Court was punctuated by graphic testimony and cast a spotlight on the controversial practice of late-term abortions.

Witness testimony described the babies as born breathing, moving and making sounds. Testimony also depicted a filthy clinic, and prosecutors called it a "house of horrors."

Gosnell also was found guilty of performing 21 abortions after 24 weeks of pregnancy at his clinic.

It is legal in Pennsylvania to abort a fetus up to 24 weeks into a pregnancy.

Nine states ban abortions after 20 weeks, according to the pro-choice organization NARAL. Other states recently put new restrictions on abortions, with Arkansas banning them at 12 weeks and North Dakota at six weeks.

Ninety-two percent of abortions are performed before 14 weeks, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and 1.3 percent are performed beyond 20 weeks.

Gosnell was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter in the case of Karnamaya Mongar, 41, of Virginia, who died from a drug overdose after going to him for an abortion.

He also was convicted of infanticide and conspiracy in the babies' deaths and found guilty of 211 counts of failing to comply with a state law that requires a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion is performed.

Gosnell has been in jail since his arrest in January 2011.

The jury cleared him of one charge of first-degree murder related to one of the babies he was accused of killing.

He was sentenced on Tuesday for the murders of infants identified only as Babies C and D, the prosecutor said.

He is due to be sentenced on Wednesday for the murder of a third baby, known as Baby A, the prosecutor said.

A clinic worker testified during the trial that Gosnell had

cut the spinal cords of babies born breathing including Baby A, which she said the doctor had described as “big enough to walk me to the bus stop.”

Gosnell’s defense had claimed there was no evidence that the babies were alive after they were aborted and that any noise or movement would have been involuntary spasms.

Eight other defendants have pleaded guilty to a variety of charges and are in jail awaiting sentencing later this month. They include Gosnell’s wife, Pearl, a cosmetologist who helped perform abortions.