

Planned Parenthood Surrenders in Arizona Battle

In a victory for Christians everywhere, Planned Parenthood has decided to end its legal attack on Arizona's Abortion Consent Act.

Attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) together with the Center for Arizona Policy, the Bioethics Defense Fund, and the Life Legal Defense Foundation defended the law. In August, the Arizona Court of Appeals lifted an injunction against the law and determined that it was constitutional.

"A woman's right to make a fully informed choice is more important than Planned Parenthood's desire to profit from abortions," says ADF Senior Counsel Steven H. Aden, who argued before the Court of Appeals on June 14. "Without this legal roadblock, women will now be better protected—and so will pro-life medical professionals whom the law protects from being coerced into participating in abortions."

The Arizona Abortion Consent Act prohibits non-physicians from performing surgical abortions, provides for women to receive full and accurate information at least 24 hours before an abortion, protects health-care workers who object to performing or facilitating abortions, and requires notarized parental consent for minors seeking abortions. The legislation also ensures that women receive information on abortion alternatives, long-term medical risks, and the probable gestational age of the preborn child at the time of the requested abortion.

"We hold that the statutes at issue would withstand federal constitutional scrutiny," the Court of Appeals wrote in its 3-0 March opinion, "and that the Arizona Constitution—to the extent it protects abortion rights at all—offers no greater protection than the federal constitution with respect to the

regulations at issue in this case. ... We hold that the statutes affected by the preliminary injunction are constitutional, and we therefore vacate the injunction in its entirety.”

The U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld 24-hour waiting periods, and multiple polls have found overwhelming public support for protections like those included in Arizona’s act.

“Everyone deserves full and accurate information before undergoing any medical procedure,” says Center for Arizona Policy Legal Counsel Deborah Sheasby, co-counsel and one of nearly 2,100 attorneys in the ADF alliance. “These types of protections have been repeatedly upheld and are overwhelmingly supported by the public.”

The appeal in the case, *Planned Parenthood Arizona v. Horne*, was filed on behalf of legislators, doctors, and numerous organizations who all sought to intervene in the case to defend the act’s protections. The Court of Appeals granted intervention to most of the parties.