

UPDATE: Ohio Gov Signs Abortion Bill That Ensures 'If a Heartbeat's Detected, the Baby's Protected'

The Ohio Senate and House passed a bill this week that would ban most abortions. Gov. Mike DeWine signed the legislation Thursday afternoon.

"The signing of this bill today is consistent with that respect for life and the imperative to protect those who cannot protect themselves," DeWine said.

"Victory!" says Janet Porter, who authored the bill and began efforts to legalize it almost a decade ago. "All the credit, all the glory, goes to Jesus Christ, the author and giver of life."

Porter also founded Faith2Action, the nation's largest network of pro-family groups.

With the bill's passage, Ohio becomes the seventh state to pass a law that ensures "if a heartbeat's detected, the baby's protected," according to a Faith2Action release.

According to *USA Today*,

Under the bill, doctors would face a fifth-degree felony punishable by up to a year in prison for performing an abortion after detecting a heartbeat. The bill has an exception to save the life of the woman but no exception for rape or incest—in line with current state law.

The legislation was crafted in Ohio, but it has gained momentum nationwide. Ohio is one of four states to pass the abortion ban in 2019 alone. A similar bill sits on Georgia

Gov. Brian Kemp's desk.

Former Gov. John Kasich vetoed the abortion ban twice, concerned about the legal bill taxpayers would foot.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*,

Five other states have passed similar bans, two of which have been blocked by courts. Since conservative Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh was confirmed to the Supreme Court, Republican-led states have passed abortion restrictions in an effort to have the court overturn Roe vs. Wade, the landmark 1973 ruling that legalized abortion. ...

Opponents' protests did nothing to budge a largely closed-mouthed GOP majority on the House Health Committee. Republicans won an 11-7 party-line vote that sent the bill to the full House, where it passed Wednesday.

Republican state Rep. Candice Keller called the legislation "the most compassionate bill we've ever passed."

She rejected suggestions that everyone knows someone who has had, or will need, an abortion; that women will continue to have abortions, only unsafely; and even that reproductive rights are about women.

"If we are really about empowering the women of Ohio and empowering the women of this country, we will begin to tell the truth about the abortion industry and the enormous amount of profit that is made on the backs of women," she said. ...

Republican Derek Merrin, chairman of the house health panel, said he was following his conscience: "My heart, Mr. Speaker, tells me it's wrong."

Prohibiting abortions at the first detectable heartbeat means prohibiting virtually all abortions, said Dr. Michael

Cackovic, a specialist in maternal fetal medicine at Ohio State University Medical Center. He said current standard practice, which involves transvaginal ultrasound, can reliably detect a heartbeat five to six weeks into pregnancy.

“Essentially, that’s three to four weeks after conception, or one to two weeks after a missed period,” he said.

Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Tennessee, Texas, South Carolina and West Virginia each have some sort of proposed “heartbeat bill.”

The Georgia legislature passed a similar bill last month that is awaiting the governor’s signature.

Shawn Carney, president and CEO of 40 Days for Life, praised the bill.

“This is yet another example that abortion is barbaric and Americans want to protect the most vulnerable among us,” Carney says. “The timing of this is crucial as many politicians openly, calmly and coldly advocate for infanticide. The current climate shows the tide turning for science and life after 46 years of legalized abortion.”