



512 10th Street, NW Washington, DC 20004-1401
(202) 626-8800 FAX: (202) 737-9189 Website: www.nrlc.org

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For more information: Megan McCrum, (202) 626-8820, federallegislation@nrlc.org
or Jessica Rodgers, (202) 626-8825, mediarelations@nrlc.org

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE APPROVES LATE ABORTION BAN FOR NATION'S CAPITAL; NEW POLL SHOWS 58-27% NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR REPLACING CURRENT ABORTION-UNTIL-BIRTH POLICY IN D.C.

WASHINGTON (July 18, 2012) -- The Judiciary Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives today approved legislation to end the current legal policy in the nation's capital, where abortion is currently legal for any reason until the moment of birth.

The committee voted 18-14 to favorably report the District of Columbia Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act (H.R. 3803), which would make abortion impermissible in the federal District after 22 weeks of pregnancy (22 weeks LMP, equivalent to 20 weeks fetal age), unless necessary to prevent the death of the mother.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Trent Franks (R-Az.), currently has [215 House cosponsors](#). Today's committee vote was along party lines.

"A vote against this bill amounts to a vote to ratify the extreme policy currently in effect in the nation's capital, where abortion is completely legal for any reason until the moment of birth," said NRLC Legislative Director Douglas Johnson. "Under the Constitution, members of Congress, and the President, are ultimately accountable for this extreme policy."

By more than a 2-to-1 margin (58-27%), American adults would be more likely to vote for lawmakers who support the bill approved by the committee today, according to a nationwide live telephone poll of 1,010 adults (MOE +/-3.1%), conducted July 12-15 by The Polling Company, Inc./WomanTrend. In response to a separate poll question, respondents favored, by a 3-to-1 margin (63-21%), a policy of not permitting abortion anywhere "after the point where substantial medical evidence says that the unborn child can feel pain," unless it is "necessary to save a mother's life."

In the bill, Congress adopts findings that by 20 weeks after fertilization (if not earlier), the unborn child has the capacity to experience great pain. The bill then prohibits abortion after that point, except when an acute physical condition endangers the life of the mother. Expert testimony was presented at a May 17 hearing on the bill showing that at 20 weeks fetal age, 6% of infants born spontaneously now survive long term in good neo-natal units. The long-term survival rates are 26% at 21 weeks fetal age and 55% at 22 weeks fetal age. (To convert to the alternate "LMP" dating system used by ob-gyns and abortion providers, also known as "weeks of pregnancy," add two weeks to each figure.)

A Senate companion bill (S. 2103) has [30 cosponsors](#). Seven states have already enacted similar legislation.

The NRLC website contains much documentation on the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act and on the scientific evidence that unborn children, by 20 weeks fetal age if not before, have the capacity to experience great pain, [here](#). The abortion method most often used at this stage, the "D&E," is depicted in a medical illustration, [here](#).

Founded in 1968, the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the federation of 50 state right-to-life affiliates and more than 3,000 local chapters, is the nation's oldest and largest grassroots pro-life organization.