

May 22, 2003

Representative Ray Allen
Texas House of Representatives
Austin, Texas 78768

URGENT - by fax: 512-463-1130

Dear Representative Allen:

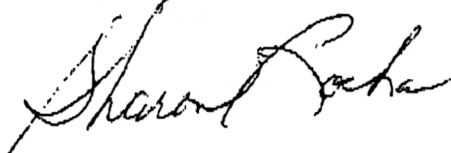
I am the mother of Laci Peterson and the grandmother of Connor Peterson. I expect that you have seen the press coverage regarding their brutal murders, and that you are aware that two homicide charges have been filed by state authorities.

However, as you know, if the same crime had occurred in Texas, only a single homicide charge would have been permitted. And in cases in which a Texas mother survives an assault, but loses her baby, Texas law currently does not recognize any loss of human life.

This injustice would be cured by enactment of your Pre-natal Protection Act (SB 319), which would recognize the unborn child as a second victim when he or she is injured or killed during a criminal attack on the mother. I urge every representative to support this bill, in the interests of true justice. I understand that the Texas Senate passed this bill by a voice vote today, but that the bill will die in a House committee unless it is scheduled by Sunday, May 25. This bill is necessary to ensure that in the future, no mother who loses her baby in a criminal attack is later told by state authorities, "We are sorry, but nobody died in that crime." It is necessary to prevent any surviving grandparent, such as myself, from being told, "In the eyes of the law, you lost a daughter, but not a grandson."

I recently returned from Washington, where I met with lawmakers who are seeking enactment of a federal bill, the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, which would recognize the two-victim principle in federal law. However, the federal bill would apply only to unborn children who are injured or killed during federal and military crimes. Since most violent crimes are covered by state laws, it is most important that every state also recognize the two-victim principle. Twenty-seven states already recognize unborn victims of violence in their criminal laws. I pray that Texas will become the twenty-eighth.

Sincerely,



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Ray Allen

