



News Release

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Missouri Legislature Passes Telemedicine Abortion Ban

MAY 14, 2013 JEFFERSON CITY, MO – The Missouri House passed legislation on Monday that will prevent the spread of telemedicine abortions in Missouri. House Bill 400, sponsored by Representative Jeanie Riddle (R-Mokane), passed the House by a vote of 115-39. The final passage of the bill saw no debate in the House, where debate occurred earlier in the legislative session before the bill went to the Senate.

This bill will prevent Planned Parenthood and others from setting up clinics in remote portions of Missouri to perform telemedicine abortions. The legislation requires that a physician be present to administer RU-486, the drug most commonly used in non-surgical abortions, and will stop any efforts by Planned Parenthood and others to perform telemedicine abortions in Missouri.

“We believe the legislature did the right thing by passing this bill. They are keeping Missouri from becoming another Iowa,” Tyler McClay, general counsel for the MCC said. McClay testified in support of this bill twice before House and Senate committees.

Women seeking a medical abortion currently take RU-486 at the clinic and are then given a dose to take at home, 24 to 48 hours later. Under the legislation, the physician prescribing or dispensing an abortion-inducing drug would need to be present for the initial dose.

In Iowa there are 17 clinics that perform these abortions via video conferencing. The passage of this legislation ensures that will not happen in Missouri. The bill now goes to the governor’s desk.

The legislation passed the Senate last week on a vote of 23-7.

McClay said the MCC was encouraged that the bill passed the legislature the same day a Philadelphia jury convicted Dr. Kermit Gosnell of three counts of first-degree murder. Gosnell operated the Women’s Medical Society clinic in West Philadelphia where he performed late-term abortions.

“It was a day that re-enforced the evil nature of abortion and saw Missouri take a positive step towards ensuring that modern technologies are not used to spread this evil,” McClay said.