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Mayer's Bill Preventing Late-Term Abortion Now Law

JULY 15TH 2011 BY UNKNOWN

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JEFFERSON CITY – Legislation carried through the General Assembly by Senate Leader Robert N. Mayer, R-Dexter, will ensure that babies capable of sustaining life outside the womb are not subject to late-term abortions.

Senate Bill 65, sponsored by Mayer, and House Bill 213, handled by the Senate leader in the upper chamber, will change provisions relating to abortions in Missouri with respect to viability by preventing the abortion of unborn babies of the gestational age of 20 weeks or more who are determined by a physician to be viable outside of the mother's womb.

“This legislation continues lawmakers’ work to protect those who have yet to have a voice,” said Mayer. “At 20 weeks, the mother is half-way through her pregnancy. Her baby’s organs are developing and moving to their proper places, the brain continues to form and grow, and the baby can even swallow. Some mothers can even begin to feel their baby’s movements and many parents around this time find out if they are having a girl or a boy. Protections found in this legislation needed to be put into place to prevent unnecessary and horrific ends to these lives.”

The legislation will, with the exception of a medical emergency, require the physician to determine the gestational age of the unborn child before performing an abortion. If the doctor determines the baby is 20 weeks or more, the physician would test for viability. If viable, no abortion could be performed unless it is necessary to preserve the life of the

woman. If the unborn child is 20 weeks or more, not determined viable, and an abortion is performed, SB 65 and HB 213 requires the doctor to submit a report to the Department of Health and Senior Services.

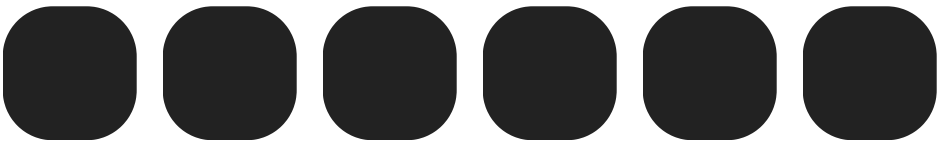
Penalties for violating the provisions of this bill include a Class C felony, and a physician who pleads guilty to or is convicted of performing or inducing an abortion in violation of this act would be subject to having his or her license to practice medicine in Missouri suspended for three years. In addition, any hospital or ambulatory surgical center that knowingly violates this act will be subject to suspension or revocation of its license.

“Missouri law already requires mothers to receive information about alternatives to abortion,” said Mayer. “This legislation goes further by preventing late-term abortions in our state, allowing those babies capable of sustaining life outside the womb a chance to life. I’m proud of our work in the Legislature and I will continue to fight for those who need representation.”

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