

Louisiana Enacts Pro-Life Law

BY Dave Andrukso

On June 17, Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco signed into a law an abortion measure that will take effect if the Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade* or if a constitutional amendment is ratified that would give states the authority to prohibit abortions. The Louisiana measure is commonly referred to as a "trigger" law, a law which takes effect provided something else takes place first.

Since this post-Roe activation law would only go into effect when *Roe v. Wade* is reversed, it should not be subject to any current constitutional challenge.

Under the new law abortions would be allowed to save the life of the mother or to prevent "a substantial risk of death due to a physical condition or to prevent the serious permanent impairment of a life-sustaining organ" of the woman.

Gov. Blanco signed the bill after the Louisiana Senate accepted changes made to its proposal by the House by a vote of 27-0.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America President Cecile Richards attacked the measure, saying, "This law puts extremist ideology above the health and safety of women." Nancy Keenan, president of NARAL Pro-Choice America, added, "This egregious attack on women's freedom and privacy will not go unanswered."

Currently there are at least five votes on the United States Supreme Court to uphold *Roe v. Wade*. Justices Anthony Kennedy, David Souter, and John Stevens voted in favor of *Roe* in the case of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. Justices Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, appointed by President Bill Clinton, are known to support *Roe*.

Two justices, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, are known to oppose *Roe*. Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito have not yet voted on *Roe*'s holdings.