FOCA, Beyond Roe v. Wade, Invalidates Pro-Life Laws and Speech

Barack Obama has promised to sign the so-called “Freedom of Choice Act” (FOCA), which would obliterate all the hard-won victories that pro-lifers have secured. FOCA would make partial-birth abortion legal again, require taxpayer funding of abortion, and would strike down all limitations on abortion such as parental notification laws and informed consent.

Obama is a cosponsor of the FOCA. However, in order for him to sign it into law, it would first have to be approved by the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, after the 111th Congress convenes in January.

Another provision of the FOCA prohibits any law or government policy that would “discriminate against the exercise of conscience” to FOCA and other legislation designed to promote abortion.

One result of this language would be to nullify the federal ban on partial-birth abortion that went into effect in 2007 after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld it.

Another provision of the FOCA prohibits any law or government policy that would “discriminate against the exercise of the right...in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information.” According to Douglas Johnson, NRLC’s director of federal legislation, “This sweeping mandate could cover everything from rural health clinics, to health education programs in public schools—and even to pro-life speeches by public officials.”

About half of the states have parental notification or informed consent laws which the Supreme Court has said are permissible under Roe v. Wade, but these will be wiped out under FOCA. The Hyde Amendment, which prohibits federal funding of most abortions, was allowed under Roe v. Wade but will be invalidated if FOCA becomes law. Under Roe v. Wade, laws that prohibit abortions in public hospitals were allowed, but FOCA will override this.

Conscience rights of doctors, nurses, hospitals, health care providers and other licensed professionals to decline to provide, or pay for, abortions would be put in jeopardy under FOCA. Medical professionals who are committed to protecting all human life will likely face a decision whether to act contrary to the FOCA or lose their position.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Pro-Life Activities Chairman Bishop Justin Rigali of Philadelphia pointed out in a letter to Congress that: “We can’t reduce abortions by promoting abortion. We cannot reduce abortions by invalidating the very laws that have been enforced to reduce abortions. We cannot reduce abortions by insisting that every program supporting women in childbirth and child care must also support abortion. No one who sponsors legislation like FOCA can credibly claim to be part of a good faith discussion on how to reduce abortions. Therefore, I urge all members of Congress to pledge their opposition to FOCA and other legislation designed to promote abortion.”

A Grave Mistake and an Abiding Hope

By Fr. Frank Pavone, President, National Pro-Life Religious Council
National Director, Priests for Life

The man elected to the Presidency this year said during the campaign that he does not know when a human being starts to have human rights. How can one govern from that starting point? Can one govern to protect human rights; to do it successfully, you have to know where they come from, and when they begin.

The American people do not share Barack Obama’s extreme and offensive views on abortion. They never have and they never will. The coming four years will see a widening gap between the people and their President on this fundamental issue. As Americans come to know how extreme his position is, the intensity of the struggle to protect these children will only increase.

The pro-life movement has made significant gains in the courts and in the law in these last eight years. For the next four, the movement will work to prevent the erosion of that progress.

It would be a serious mistake for people to think that this election means the pro-life movement has no political power. All politics is local. Political power is about people. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was once told that given the political realities, civil rights legislation would be impossible to pass. “We’ll just have to see about that,” he replied. And the civil rights movement was born, stirring the hearts of the people to lead the nation to the victory of justice.

So it is with our movement. The vast majority of Americans are pro-life. They will fight abortion on the local level, opening pregnancy centers and closing abortion mills, recruiting their Churches and educating their children, proclaiming the message in the streets and in the media and demonstrating in the streets. The pro-life movement is winning this battle in the hearts and minds of the American people, as opinion polls show and as the shrinking number of abortion mills and abortion providers indicate. Political races are always a swing of the pendulum. As soon as you win, you begin to lose, and as soon as you lose, you begin the ascent again to winning. In the next two election cycles (2010 and 2012) the pro-life movement will make up for political ground lost in this one.

It is all right to be disappointed at the end of an election season, but one must never walk away. Amidst disappointment is abiding hope in America, where everything is still possible, and where a new chapter of the pro-life movement has just begun. The efforts that were made, and the sacrifices endured in this election season made a difference, and we will take that hope for the future of her life out of this election and use it to help us raise up the people who will dismantle the Culture of Death. We will keep marching toward that pro-life America we seek, and won’t stop until we get there.

“`The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government.'

-Thomas Jefferson
Was Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi correctly stated that human life begins? The autumn's wave of pro-choice zeal is disturbing to many in the pro-life movement, who believe that human life begins at the moment of conception. The pro-life movement is not alone in this belief. The Pope, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and others believe that human life begins at the moment of conception. In my view, this is the moment of beginning because it is the moment when the soul is present from the moment of conception. In this article, I will follow the pro-life position and review the evidence concerning the moment of beginning.

The root of the pro-life argument is the belief that human life begins at the moment of conception. The moment of conception is the moment when the soul is present from the moment of conception. This belief is based on the Bible, which states that the soul is present from the moment of conception. The Bible states, "And the soul of man is the spirit that makes him alive." (Proverbs 21:25; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 139:13).

The moment of conception is the moment when the soul is present from the moment of conception. This belief is based on the Bible, which states that the soul is present from the moment of conception. The Bible states, "And the soul of man is the spirit that makes him alive." (Proverbs 21:25; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 139:13).

In conclusion, I believe that human life begins at the moment of conception. This belief is based on the Bible, which states that the soul is present from the moment of conception. The Bible states, "And the soul of man is the spirit that makes him alive." (Proverbs 21:25; Genesis 2:7; Psalm 139:13).