



512 10th Street, NW Washington, DC 20004-1401  
(202) 626-8800 FAX: (202) 737-9189 Website: www.nrlc.org

(202) 626-8820

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RE: Cosponsorship of the *Pain-Capable  
Unborn Child Protection Act* (H.R. 1797)

Dear Member of Congress:

The Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice yesterday approved landmark pro-life legislation (H.R. 1797) to extend protection nationwide to unborn children who have reached 20 weeks fetal age, based on findings that by that point, if not before, they have attained the capacity to experience pain. The full Judiciary Committee is expected to take up the bill in the near future.

The National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the nationwide federation of state right-to-life organizations, urges you to do everything you can to advance this legislation, including adding your name as a cosponsor if you have not already done so. NRLC is regularly updating our affiliates nationwide on the status of the cosponsorship drive – there are 140 cosponsors to date. The list of cosponsors is updated on a daily basis on our web-based Legislation Action Center at <http://www.capwiz.com/nrlc/home/>

The bill, sponsored by Congressman Trent Franks, contains legislative findings and operative language very similar to laws already enacted in nine states. Like those state laws, H.R. 1797 contains findings of fact regarding the medical evidence that unborn children experience pain at least by 20 weeks after fertilization (which is 22 weeks in the "LMP" system, or about the start of the sixth month), and prohibits abortion after that point, except when an acute physical condition endangers the life of the mother. Some of the extensive evidence that unborn children have the capacity to experience pain, at least by 20 weeks, is available on the NRLC website at [http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/Fetal\\_Pain/index.html](http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/Fetal_Pain/index.html)

As initially introduced, H.R. 1797 applied only to the District of Columbia. However, with NRLC's strong support, the subcommittee yesterday approved a substitute amendment that expanded the bill's protective provisions nationwide. Because of coverage surrounding the trial of Kermit Gosnell and subsequent revelations about other abortionists, many Americans are becoming aware for the first time that abortions are

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frequently performed late in pregnancy, on babies who are capable of being born alive, and on babies who will experience great pain while being killed.

Late abortions are not “rare.” NRLC estimates that at least 140 abortion providers offer abortions past the point that H.R. 1797 would permit. These late abortions are performed using a variety of techniques, including a method in which the unborn child’s arms and legs are twisted off by brute manual force, using a long stainless steel clamping tool. A medical illustration of this common method (“D&E”) is posted here:

<http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/pba/DEabortiongraphic.html>

During the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, the original Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act (H.R. 3803) garnered 222 co-sponsors, and received the support of a majority of House members on a Suspension Calendar vote on July 31, 2012 (roll call no. 539).

Thank you for your consideration of NRLC’s requests on this vital legislation.

Respectfully,



Douglas Johnson  
Legislative Director  
National Right to Life Committee (NRLC)  
512 10th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004  
(202) 626-8820  
[federallegislation@nrlc.org](mailto:federallegislation@nrlc.org)  
<http://www.nrlc.org>



Susan T. Muskett, J.D.  
Senior Legislative Counsel