



September 9, 2015

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott:

The Texas Conservative Coalition (TCC) applauds your announcement of the new statewide “LIFE Initiative,” a comprehensive set of policy proposals that, when implemented, will provide greater protection for unborn children and prevent the sale of fetal body parts. Although upholding the sanctity of life is always a vitally important governmental objective, the urgency with which the goal must be pursued has been made apparent by a series of recent undercover videos released by the Center for Medical Progress. The video footage depicts employees of Planned Parenthood, a well-known provider of abortion services and contraceptives, failing to obtain patient consent before performing abortions, negotiating compensation for the sale of baby body parts, and cutting apart and shipping fully-intact late-term aborted fetuses. Some of the shocking and crass conversations on camera take place at a Houston facility.

The LIFE Initiative you have proposed will ensure that many of the disturbing attitudes and practices in the videos continue to have no place in Texas. For example, parts of the LIFE plan will make it a felony under Texas law to perform a partial-birth abortion and make it illegal for abortion doctors to risk a woman’s health by altering the procedure to preserve fetal body parts. Another will eliminate and criminalize any sale or transaction of fetal tissue by an abortion clinic. These measures should incentivize Planned Parenthood and other providers to avoid performing certain dangerous, late-term abortions, as well as the reprehensible selling of intact late term fetuses, so as not to incur criminal liability in Texas.

In one video, Planned Parenthood’s Senior Director of Medical Research, Deborah Nucatola, is seen discussing the method of “crushing” a fetus in order to keep desired internal organs intact for harvesting. She explains that Planned Parenthood has “been very good at getting heart, lung, liver, because we know that, so I’m not gonna crush that part, I’m gonna basically crush below, I’m gonna crush above, and I’m gonna see if I can get it all intact.” In separate footage, a former

employee of a California clinic describes the procurement of organs from a nearly intact late-term fetus, saying that her supervisor “just tap[ped] the heart [of the aborted fetus,] and it start[ed] beating. And I’m sitting here and I’m looking at this fetus, and its heart is beating, and I don’t know what to think.”

This footage makes clear the propriety of another tenet of the LIFE Initiative, which requires that taxpayer funding for Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers is eliminated at both the state and local levels. Obviously, an organization that crushes fetal body parts and aborts babies with beating hearts is not a worthy recipient of any government financial aid. Although Texas took first steps in this direction in 2011, when it banned Planned Parenthood and other clinics with ties to abortion providers from the Medicaid Women’s Health Program, the LIFE pledge represents the state’s ongoing commitment to defunding.

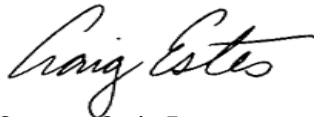
When considering the political and social ramifications of abortion, attention also must be paid to encouraging alternatives to abortion. Your LIFE initiative takes this important factor into account by proposing that the state improve and expand the availability of adoption services as well as increase awareness about Texas’ child support enforcement program.

With investigations regarding Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers’ practices still ongoing, TCC strongly supports your proposals to protect unborn life and assist mothers in dire personal situations. We are available to assist your office, and we are prepared to take legislative action when the time comes.

Sincerely,



Senator Brian Birdwell



Senator Craig Estes



Senator Kelly Hancock



Senator Van Taylor



Representative Charles "Doc" Anderson



Representative Cecil Bell Jr.



Representative Dwayne Bohac



Representative Dennis Bonnen



Representative Greg Bonnen



Representative Cindy Burkett



Representative Angie Chen Button



Representative DeWayne Burns



Representative Giovanni Capriglione



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Representative Byron Cook



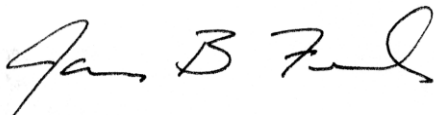
Representative Myra Crownover



Representative Tony Dale



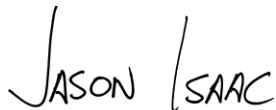
Representative Dan Flynn



Representative James Frank



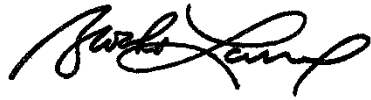
Representative Craig Goldman



Representative Jason Isaac



Representative Phil King



Representative Brooks Landgraf



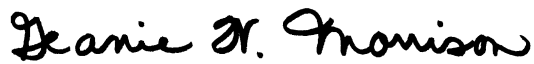
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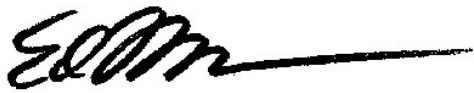
Representative Kenneth Sheets



Representative Ron Simmons



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Representative Ed Thompson



Representative Scott Turner



Representative James White



Representative Paul Workman

*John Wray*

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