



2019 PETITION INITIATIVE POSITION STATEMENTS

Michigan's unique situation, with its long-standing ban on abortion, requires that any pro-life legislation be carefully evaluated to ensure that it will not weaken or repeal the state's existing ban on abortion. Michigan has the longest existing and, some say, the strongest pro-life law in the country. Since 1846, Michigan law has banned all abortions. The state's most current abortion ban went into effect in 1931, providing exception only to save the life of the mother. Following the U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973, the 1931 ban was upheld by the Michigan Supreme Court, within the parameters of *Roe*, and continues to ban abortions post-viability. Therefore, Michigan's complete ban on abortion will go back into effect when *Roe* is overturned.



SUPPORTS: Michigan Values Life: End Dismemberment Abortion



Dismemberment abortion (also referred to as Dilation and Evacuation (D&E)) is a particularly gruesome procedure, usually performed in the second trimester of pregnancy. It involves dismembering an unborn baby while it is still alive, by tearing the baby apart limb by limb inside the womb and individually removing each of the body parts. In 2018, it was reported that Michigan had 1,908 dismemberment abortions, which are 7.1% of the state's 26,716 abortions reported that year, and 54.4% of all the abortions reported after thirteen weeks gestation.

At present, twelve other states have passed bans on this procedure. The Michigan Values Life citizen's petition would amend the state's active 2011 law which bans the partial-birth abortion procedure. Using this approach, it is likely that the dismemberment ban will be determined to be constitutional. The dismemberment ban poses no threat to Michigan's complete abortion ban because it does not ban abortion. It bans a specific abortion procedure.

In collaboration with Right to Life of Michigan, MCC **SUPPORTS** the initiative to end dismemberment abortion. For more information visit the Michigan Values Life committee website www.michiganvalueslife.org.



DOES NOT SUPPORT: Michigan Heartbeat Coalition

A second petition has been initiated to ban any abortion after cardiac activity is detectable (approximately 6-8 weeks of gestation). While the intent of this legislation is honorable, there is cause for concern. It could weaken and potentially supersede Michigan's existing ban on all abortions. Preserving Michigan's existing ban on abortion is of paramount concern, as this law *already* protects *all* unborn children, once a heartbeat is detected and even prior to its detection.



A heartbeat ban most likely would not go into effect until *Roe v. Wade* is overturned. At that point, the state's existing ban on abortion would again become enforceable. At best, the heartbeat ban is then redundant. At worst, the heartbeat ban could be interpreted to create a conflict in the law and replace the 1931 ban, actually allowing abortions up until a baby's heartbeat is detected.

Additionally, the petition language itself does not take into account Michigan law and its many abortion restrictions, such as the limitation that only licensed physicians may perform abortions. As a result, the proposed language has the potential to also overturn other important protections within state law.

For these reasons, MCC **DOES NOT SUPPORT** the initiative from the Michigan Heartbeat Coalition.