

August 8, 2022

To: Governor Mike DeWine and the 134<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly

**Re: Ohio clergy representing 160 congregations call for swift passage of Human Life Protection Act**

Psalm 127 says, "Children are a heritage of the LORD, and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them...."

As one hundred -sixty faith leaders across Ohio, we thank GOD for the recent Supreme Court decision to reverse the 1973 Roe v. Wade court opinion. (1) Abortion is infanticide and never was a right expressly written in the U.S. Constitution. This diabolical decision allowed the murder of an unborn child on demand up to birth, (2) led to the untimely deaths of at least sixty-three million unborn children (3) and caused America to be a reproach among the nations. (4)

To be clear, abortion is not health care. Abortion is murder that takes the life of an unborn child and can cause grave physical harm to the mother and emotional harm to both the mother (5) and father (6).

As a result of the Supreme Court reversal, it is our understanding restrictions on abortion can now be determined at the state level as prescribed in the Tenth Amendment. Presently abortion in Ohio is banned at or around six weeks of pregnancy (when a heartbeat is detected) except in cases of life endangerment of the mother. While this Heartbeat Law is important, moral clarity surrounding the unborn should be strengthened by eliminating legislative loopholes.

Over the past decade, the General Assembly has demonstrated Ohio is a pro-life state with more than thirty abortion restrictions enacted since 2011.(7) We believe the "Human Life Protection Act," currently in committee, can reinforce this reputation. The following provisions in the bill we support include: (8)(9)

- ❖ No person shall purposely take the life of a child born by attempted abortion who is alive when removed from the uterus of the pregnant woman. Whoever violates this section is guilty of abortion manslaughter, a felony of the first degree, punishable by a minimum of four and a maximum of twenty-five years of imprisonment and a fine of not more than ten thousand dollars
- ❖ A woman on whom an abortion was performed in violation of sections 2904.03, 2904.04, or 2904.05 of the Revised Code may file a civil action for the wrongful death of her unborn child if the violation was a proximate cause of the death of her unborn child with the only exception when the abortion was necessary to prevent the death of the pregnant woman or a serious risk of the substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily function of the pregnant woman
- ❖ No person shall purposely manufacture, possess for sale or distribution, advertise, or hold oneself out as possessing for sale or distribution, or sell or distribute, any drugs, medicine, instrument, or device, Whoever violates this section is guilty of promoting abortion, a misdemeanor of the first degree
- ❖ The state medical board shall revoke a physician's license to practice medicine in this state if the physician is guilty of any violations of sections 2904.03 to 2904.05 of the Revised Code

**All things considered, the "Human Life Protection Act" H.B. 598 and its companion S.B. 123 will effectively ban abortion in the State of Ohio. As clergy representing one hundred and sixty (160) diverse congregations throughout Ohio Heartland, we believe in human dignity and that life begins at conception. Therefore, we are calling on the General Assembly to swiftly pass the Human Life Protection Act and for the Governor to sign it into law. By the same token, we expect the Attorney General, County Prosecutors, and Municipal Law Directors to fulfill their duties and enforce this law.**

Some things do not change. Historically, clergy in the region have advocated for the lives of unborn babies with Down Syndrome (10) and supported the defunding of Planned Parenthood. (11) Additionally, with the advent of ultrasound technology, science is catching up with what the Bible already stated thousands of years prior: life begins at conception. As Psalm 22:10 says, "I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my GOD from my mother's belly."

Thank you for taking our thoughts on the sanctity of life into careful consideration. Choose life not death, our future generations are depending on it.

Respectfully submitted,

**The following lead clergymen representing one hundred-sixty(160) congregations across the Buckeye Bible Belt**

<b>Pastor J.C. Church, Victory in Truth Ministries</b>	<b>Pastor Jerry O'Brien, Orville Harvest Fellowship</b>
<b>Bishop Anthony Cooper, Shelby Life Church</b>	<b>Pastor Ben Gregg, Plymouth Church of GOD</b>
<b>Pastor John Bouquet, Savannah Bethel Chapel</b>	<b>Pastor Chad Hayes, Caesarea Baptist Church</b>
<b>Pastor Bobby Edwards, Jesus is Alive Holiness</b>	<b>Pastor John Temple, Loudonville Trinity Community</b>
<b>Pastor Bill Strader, Bucyrus First Alliance</b>	<b>Pastor Brian Phillips, New Beginnings Freewill Baptist</b>
<b>Pastor Dan Zediker, Mansfield Mission Point</b>	<b>Pastor Dan Rebon, Father's Heart Healing Center</b>
<b>Pastor Chris Spencer, Crestline Grace Baptist</b>	<b>Pastor Dave Guild, Mansfield Foursquare Church</b>
<b>Pastor Dave Parsons, Zion's Refuge Baptist</b>	<b>Pastor Sheldon Mencer, Mission 3:16 Church</b>
<b>Pastor George Lewis, Shelby Temple of GOD</b>	<b>Pastor Dean Jackson, McElroy Road Church of Christ</b>
<b>Pastor Hank Webb, Belmont Community Church</b>	<b>Pastor Greg Griffith, Willard Church of GOD</b>
<b>Dr. Ricky Branham, Willard Ripley Chapel</b>	<b>Reverend El Akuchie, Godsfield House of Prayer</b>
<b>Pastor Joe Maggelet, Ashland Fellowship Christian</b>	<b>Pastor Joseph Yerger, First Evangelical Presbyterian</b>
<b>Pastor Mark Dettmer, Pleasant Grove Church</b>	<b>Pastor Aaron Boggs, Fredericktown Freewill Baptist</b>
<b>Pastor David Bates, Galion Unity Freewill</b>	<b>Pastor Layton Broome, Hayesville United Methodist</b>
<b>Pastor Nickolas Kelly, North Liberty Church</b>	<b>Pastor Rob Ratcliff, North Woodbury Freewill Baptist</b>
<b>Pastor Tim Sheets, Middletown Oasis Church</b>	<b>Pastor Bryan Schatzinger, Mansfield Calvary Chapel</b>
<b>Pastor Bruce Philippi, Journey Life Center</b>	<b>Pastor Layton Broome, Lakefork United Methodist</b>
<b>Pastor James Spencer, Mansfield Peoples' Baptist</b>	<b>Pastor Rick Lewis, Shelby Church of GOD</b>
<b>Pastor Ed Colegrove, Edison Enterprise Baptist</b>	<b>Pastor Joe Smith, Ontario Westside Baptist</b>
<b>Pastor Louis Blevins, Mansfield Latter Rain Church</b>	<b>Pastor Juan Rivera, Youngstown Victory Christian Center</b>
<b>Pastor Barry Clardy, Princeton Pike Church of GOD</b>	<b>Pastor Patrick Bailey, Butler North Bend Church Brethren</b>
<b>Pastor Russ Smith, Shiloh Wesley Evangelical</b>	<b>Pastor Ron Smals, Woodville Grace Brethren</b>
<b>Pastor Les Vnasdale, Cornerstone Grace Brethren</b>	<b>Pastor Matthew Potosky, Albion Brethren Church</b>
<b>Pastor Matt Merendino, Clear Fork Alliance</b>	<b>Pastor Troy Wooten, Christian Life Center</b>
<b>Pastor Faron Cole, Eastern Road Church of GOD</b>	<b>Pastor Taylor Howard, Mansfield Apostolic Holiness</b>
<b>Pastor Robert O'Brian, Mansfield Apostolic Faith</b>	<b>Pastor Joe Silvestri, Wooster Bible Church</b>
<b>Pastor Art Kennard, Shelby Maranatha Christian</b>	<b>Pastor Russell Stanford, All Believers in Christ Church</b>
<b>Pastor Dallas Waggle, Lucas Foursquare Church</b>	<b>Pastor Dan Baer, Mansfield Gospel Assembly</b>
<b>Pastor Kevin Evans, Ganges Liberty Baptist</b>	<b>Pastor Christopher Replogle, Crestline Calvary Baptist</b>
<b>Pastor Chad Berry, Lexington New Liberty Baptist</b>	<b>Rabbi William Hallbrook, Ontario Sar Shalom Center</b>
<b>Pastor Mike Rose, Hope on the Hill Chapel</b>	<b>Pastor Clint Zeigler, Sovereign Christ Church</b>
<b>Pastor Paul Staton, Bellville Honeycreek Baptist</b>	<b>Pastor Mark Meyer, Lexington GracePoint Church</b>
<b>Pastor Doug Tackett, Taylortown Community</b>	<b>Pastor John Campos, Bowman Street Church of GOD</b>
<b>Pastor James Marshall, Ganges Community</b>	<b>Pastor Randy Raynes, Mansfield Fellowship Baptist</b>
<b>Pastor Floyd Allen, Philippian Community Church</b>	<b>Pastor Eric Byrom, Mansfield Grace Fellowship</b>
<b>Pastor Berry Carter, Massillon City Bible Church</b>	<b>Pastor Aaron Rose, Madison Fusion Church</b>
<b>Pastor Robert Bird, Vermillion Baptist Church</b>	<b>Pastor Joe Nichols, ARC Empowerment Center</b>
<b>Pastor Paul Matthewson, Maranatha Bible Church</b>	<b>Pastor Clyde Kerby, Hope &amp; Healing Ministries</b>

**Pastor Glen Phillips, Hillside First Church of GOD**  
**Pastor George Swain, Homerville Grace Brethren**  
**Pastor Brad Gentile, Shelby First Baptist**  
**Pastor Joshua Cole, Crestline Tabernacle of Praise**  
**Pastor Robert Kurtz, Mansfield Baptist Temple**  
**Pastor Brian Snow, Fredericktown First Baptist**  
**Rabbi Bob Bauer, Crestline Beit El Elyon**  
**Pastor David Mahon, Galion Apostolic Assembly**  
**Pastor Paul Lintern, Oakland Lutheran**  
**Pastor Mike Wilson, Lincoln Heights Baptist**  
**Pastor James Hill, Mansfield Paradise Church**  
**Pastor Steve Schag, Shelby Calvary Baptist**  
**Pastor David Koehler, Loudonville Baptist Temple**  
**Pastor Jack Williams, Walker Lake Baptist**  
**Pastor Harley Snode, North Life Church**  
**Pastor Clarence Sanderfer, New Life Baptist**  
**Elder Henry Bradley, New Community Temple**  
**Pastor Dave Rentzel, Ontario Abundant Life**  
**Pastor Steve Burkhalter, Ontario Potter's House**  
**Pastor James Mitchell, Polk New Liberty Baptist**  
**Pastor Tim Houston, Mansfield Church of GOD**  
**Pastor Matt O'Harra, Bellville First Baptist**  
**Pastor Steve Baldridge, Rome Community Church**  
**Pastor Ray Selden, Ontario First Wesleyan**  
**Pastor Bobby Mitchell, Columbus Father's House**  
**Rabbi Michael Wolf, Cincinnati Beth Messiah**  
**Bishop Eli Miller, Amish Perry District 2**  
**Pastor Andrew Stensaas, Eaton First Baptist**  
**Pastor David Howell, Power House Worship Ctr.**  
**Pastor David Ferrell, Mansfield Holiness Chapel**  
**Pastor Stephen Conn, Bethel Freewill Baptist**  
**Pastor LaMont Lindsay, Book of Life Church**  
**Pastor Matt Smith, Crestline Love Action Church**  
**Pastor Bill Fox, Crestline Faith Community Church**  
**Pastor Terry Garrett, Lexington Fusion Church**  
**Pastor Wade Hartzell, Shiloh Full Gospel**  
**Pastor Art Nicolli, McDonald Open Door Church**  
**Pastor Lawrence Cavicchi, New Life Christian**  
**Pastor Duane Hennen, Cortland Maranatha**  
**Pastor Patrick Bailey, Danville North Bend Church Brethren**  
**Pastor John Grimm, Greenwich United Methodist**  
**Pastor Mark Galambos, Awakening Church**  
**Pastor Ferlie Yates, Hanna Road Church of GOD**  
**Pastor Rick Wiseman, Promised Land Fellowship**  
**Pastor Jason Price, Mansfield Victory Baptist Church**  
**Pastor Lucian Baker, Christ the King Community Church**  
**Pastor Christopher Thomas, Diamond Hills Baptist**  
**Pastor Travis McKenzie, Ashland Compassion Church**  
**Pastor Mark Wireman, Shiloh Pentecostal Church of GOD**  
**Pastor Matthew Pond, Shelby First Freewill Baptist**  
**Pastor Paul Lintern, Southside Christian Church**  
**Pastor Steve Brennemen, Awakening Christian Center**  
**Pastor Mike Grant, Louisville Christ United Methodist**  
**Pastor Sam Flynn, Little Flock Fellowship**  
**Pastor Rich Hurles, Plymouth LifePoint Church**  
**Pastors Les & Grace Farley, Lexington Irresistible Church**  
**Pastor Jerrill Wyler, Bucyrus Wayside Chapel**  
**Bishop Sylvester Ginn, Ontario Hesus Agape Fellowship**  
**Pastor Steven Hodges, Galion Gospel Baptist**  
**Pastor Dink Porter, Mansfield Open Bible Church**  
**Bishop Charles Burgess Jr. West Salem Church of GOD**  
**Elder James DeWeese, Providence Church**  
**Pastor William Cole, Mansfield Recovery Church**  
**Pastor Troy Thompson, Lorain Church on North Coast**  
**Pastor Miler Montoya, Marion Vision del Reino**  
**Pastor Robert Caw, Newark Church Triumphant**  
**Pastor Jeremy Rands, Monclova Road Baptist**  
**Pastor Dan Barker, Cortland Trinity Church**  
**Bishop Andy Keim, Amish Perry District 1**  
**Pastor Dode Overton, Dover Burning River Church**  
**Pastor Joey Shannon, Mansfield Living Hope Church**  
**Pastor Josh Workman, Mansfield Freewill Baptist**  
**Pastor Justin Lawhorn, New Vision Crestline Church GOD Prophecy**  
**Bishop Chaz Boes, Toledo Vida Life Church**  
**Pastor John Grimm, Plymouth United Methodist**  
**Pastor Paul Bartholomew, Mohican Church of Brethren**  
**Pastor Danny Akers, Victory Rock Praise & Worship**  
**Pastor David Garlich, Hubbard Calvary Baptist**  
**Pastor Dave Davenport, Ontario Faith Baptist**  
**Pastor Joseph Cameneti, Warren Believers Church**  
**Pastor Michael Constantino, Girard New Life Christian**  
**Pastor Mark Kline, Berea Missionary Baptist**  
**Pastor DeWayne Smith, Newton Falls United Methodist**  
**Pastor DeWayne Smith, Pricetown United Methodist**

The listed clergy co-signers above are from 22 counties throughout the state. Counties with the most congregations represented include: Richland (88), Crawford (16), Ashland (10), Trumbull (10), Wayne (8), Knox (5), Huron (4), Morrow (4), Lucas (2), Butler (1), Coshocton (1), Fairfield (1), Hamilton (1), Lorain (1), Marion (1), Mahoning (1), Medina (1), Portage (1), Preble (1), Stark (1), Tuscarawas (1), Warren (1).

## References:

- (1) "19-1392 Dobbs v. Jackson Woman's Health Organization, U.S. Supreme Court, decided June 24, 2022 [https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/19-1392\\_6j37.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/19-1392_6j37.pdf)
- (2) "Roe v. Wade Allows Abortion on Demand For Any Reason Up to Birth," by Dave Andrusko, Life News, November 16, 2021, <https://www.lifenews.com/2021/11/16/roe-v-wade-allows-abortion-on-demand-for-any-reason-up-to-birth/>
- (3) "Over 63 million abortions have occurred in the US since Roe v. Wade decision in 1973," by Kyle Morris & Sam Dorman, Fox News, May 4, 2022, <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/abortions-since-roe-v-wade>
- (4) "The United States Is Radical On Abortion When Compared To Other Countries," by Charlotte Pence Bond, The Daily Wire, May 3, 2022, <https://www.dailywire.com/news/the-united-states-is-radical-on-abortion-when-compared-to-other-countries>
- (5) "The abortion and mental health controversy: A comprehensive literature review of common ground agreements, disagreements, actionable recommendations, and research opportunities," by David Reardon: "Both sides agree abortion is consistently associated with elevated rates of mental illness compared to women without history of abortion." <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6207970/>
- (6) Abortion Hurts Men Too - Illinois Right to Life, August 7, 2022 <https://illinoisrighttolife.org/abortion-hurts-men-too/>
- (7) "Anti-abortion politicians have passed 30 reproductive health care restrictions since 2011," Planned Parenthood, Revised October 2021, [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GdwCQWPeeUUEdr8UhlMKdps\\_3n-PN3tO/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GdwCQWPeeUUEdr8UhlMKdps_3n-PN3tO/view)
- (8) House bill 598, Ohio Legislature, 134th General Assembly, sponsored by Jean Schmidt, <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-HB-598>
- (9) Senate Bill 123, Ohio Legislature, 134th General Assembly, sponsored by Rep. Kristina Roegner & Sandra O'Brien, <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA134-SB-123>
- (10) "Over 100 Ohio Clergymen Demand End To 'Federal Judiciary Tyranny' [VIDEO]," by Joshua Gill, Daily Caller, May 23, 2018, <https://dailycaller.com/2018/05/23/ohio-clergymen-end-to-federal-judiciary-tyranny-video/>
- (11) "Area pastors pursue resolution to support defunding Planned Parenthood," by Rhonda Bletner, Richland Source, September 27, 2015, [https://www.richlandsource.com/news/area-pastors-pursue-resolution-to-support-defunding-planned-parenthood/article\\_3b14126a-652e-11e5-9c51-b30c811b6737.html](https://www.richlandsource.com/news/area-pastors-pursue-resolution-to-support-defunding-planned-parenthood/article_3b14126a-652e-11e5-9c51-b30c811b6737.html)