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After Nearly Fifty Years, West Virginia Legislature Protects the Unborn and Their Mothers

On September 13, 2022, both the Senate (22-7) and the House (78-17) voted to **PASS HB302**, the bill to clarify West Virginia's abortion laws. The vast majority of unborn babies and their mothers in West Virginia will now be protected from the horror of abortion.

"The Supreme Court's *Dobbs* decision returned abortion law to the people's representatives in the state legislatures where it belongs," stated West Virginians for Life (WVFL) President Wanda Franz. "Today the WV Legislature has passed a bill that will save thousands of babies' lives here in WV. WVFL thanks the pro-life legislators who support protection for all human life."

For background, as a result of *Dobbs*, abortion law in WV was once again governed by an 1848 law. Thus, by the end of June 2022, abortion was prohibited in the state. Abortion advocates immediately filed a suit on behalf of the Women's Health Center of West Virginia, to which Attorney General Morrisey responded with a strong pro-life stand. His office sought to ensure that abortion would remain illegal in WV before the case was decided. In the days that followed, Governor Justice added abortion to a special session in July, which ended in the House not concurring with the Senate vote because the two versions of the bill were incompatible.

A special session devoted to creating a compatible version occurred this week.

"For years, the people of West Virginia have fought tirelessly in defense of the unborn. Today we see our effort turned into life-saving law," said Legislative Director Sadie Shields.

WVFL looks forward to joining Governor Jim Justice when he signs the bill into law.

West Virginians for Life, the state affiliate of the National Right to Life Committee, is the state's largest pro-life group with more than 30 local pro-life chapters. West Virginians for Life works through education, legislation, and political action to protect those threatened by abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia.

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