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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. SHAYS].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 7, 1995.

I hereby designate the Honorable CHRISTOPHER SHAYS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. CANADY] for 5 minutes.

H.R. 1833, THE PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN ACT OF 1995

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the National Abortion Rights Action League has called H.R. 1833, the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 1995, "[O]ne of the most extreme, outrageous, and anti-choice measures ever to come before Congress."

Mr. Speaker, this must come as news to the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. GEPHARDT], the gentlewoman from Arkansas [Mrs. LINCOLN], and the gentleman from Rhode Island [Mr. KENNEDY], three of the many staunchly

pro-choice Members who voted for the bill.

One Member who had a 100-percent voting record with the National Abortion Rights Action League said, and I quote, "I'm not just going to vote in such a way that I have to put my conscience on the shelf." He continued by stating that it "undermines the credibility of the pro-choice movement to be defending such an indefensible procedure."

So, how have abortion advocates mounted a defense of such an indefensible procedure? They do so by ignoring the painful reality, by denying the undeniable truth, and by twisting and distorting the well-established facts.

Abortion advocates claim that H.R. 1833 would jail doctors who perform lifesaving abortions. This statement makes me wonder whether the opponents of H.R. 1833 have even bothered to read the bill. H.R., 1833 makes specific allowances for a practitioner who reasonably believes a partial-birth abortion is necessary to save the life of a mother. No one can be prosecuted and convicted under this bill for performing a partial-birth abortion which is necessary to save the life of the mother. Anyone who has any doubt about that should take a look at the text of the bill itself.

Of course, there is not a shred of evidence to suggest that a partial-birth abortion is ever necessary to save a mother's life. In fact, the American Medical Association Council on Legislation, which includes 12 doctors, voted unanimously to recommend that the AMA board of trustees endorse H.R. 1833. The council "felt [partial-birth abortion] was not a recognized medical technique and agreed that the procedure is basically repulsive." In the end, the AMA board decided to remain neutral on H.R. 1833, but it is significant that the council of 12 doctors did not recognize partial-birth abortion as a proper medical technique.

The truth is that the partial-birth abortion procedure is never necessary to protect either the life or the health of the mother. Indeed, the procedure poses significant risk to maternal health, risks such as uterine rupture and the development of cervical incompetence.

Dr. Pamela Smith, director of medical education at the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Mount Sinai Hospital in Chicago has written, and I quote, "There are absolutely no obstetrical situations encountered in this country which require a partially-delivered human fetus to be destroyed to preserve the health of the mother. Partial-birth abortion is a technique devised by abortionists for their own convenience, ignoring the known health risk to the mother. The health status of women in this country will only be enhanced by the banning of this procedure."

Proponents of the partial-birth abortion method have also claimed that the procedure is only used to kill babies with serious disabilities. Focusing the debate on babies with disabilities is a blatant attempt to avoid addressing the reality of this inhuman procedure.

Remember the brutal reality of what is done in partial-birth abortion. The baby is partially delivered alive, then stabbed through the skull. No baby's life should be taken in this manner, whether that baby is perfectly healthy or suffers from the most tragic of disabilities.

Further, neither Dr. Haskell nor Dr. McMahon, the two abortionists who have publicly discussed their use of this procedure, claim that this technique is used only in limited circumstances. In fact, Dr. Haskell told the American Medical News, and I quote, "I'll be quite frank: Most of my abortions are elective in that 20- to 24-week range. Probably 20 percent are for genetic reasons and the other 80 percent are purely elective."

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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