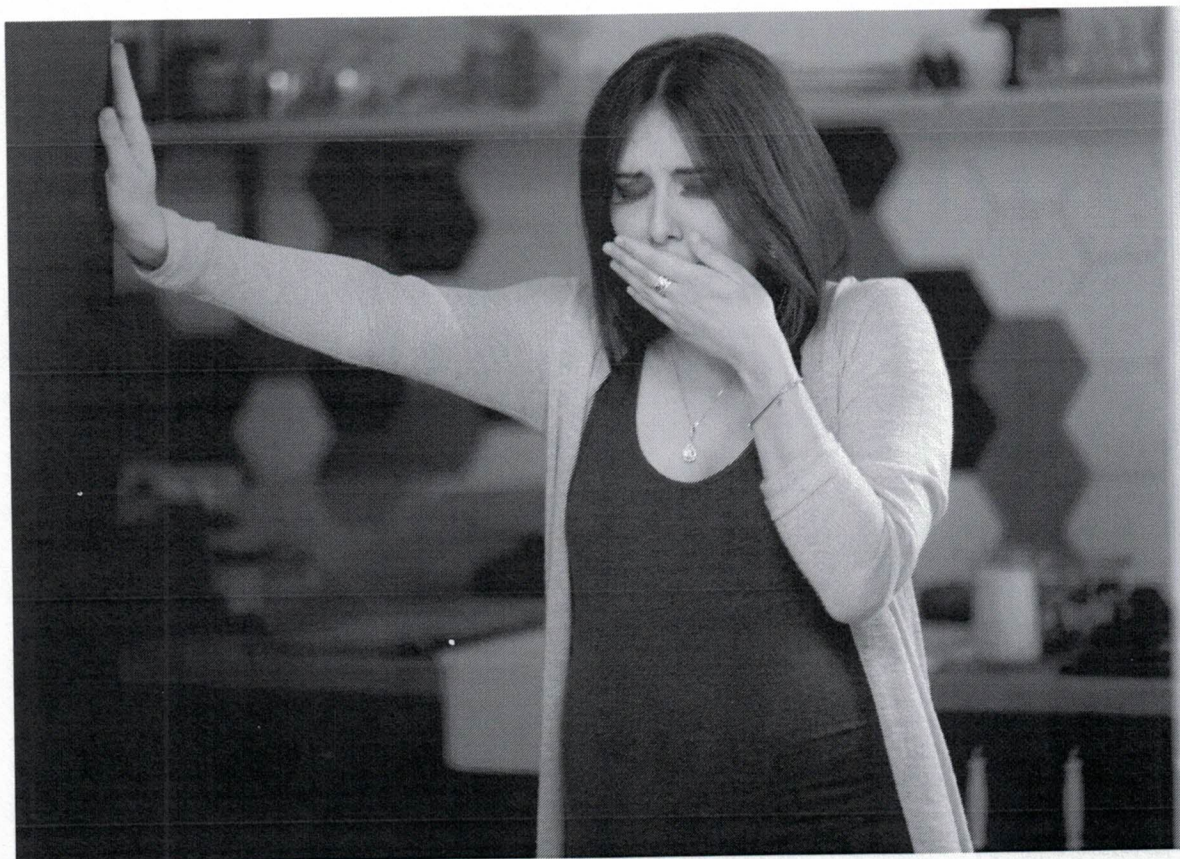


# Law Protecting Women from Coerced Abortions Goes into Effect July 1

by Indiana Right to Life | Jun 30, 2022 | Uncategorized | 0 comments



INDIANAPOLIS (JUNE 29, 2022) – New protections for pregnant women and girls against coerced abortions will go into effect July 1 in Indiana. The new law makes it a level six felony to knowingly or intentionally coerce a woman to have an abortion, and requires abortion providers and other professionals to report coercion to law enforcement.

Violation of the new law is punishable by a prison term ranging from six months to two-and-a-half years and a fine of up to \$10,000. Any medical facility that employs a mandatory reporter who fails to report coercion is subject to a Class C infraction.

“This is a law everyone on either side of the issue should be able to get behind,” said Indiana Right to Life Chief Executive Officer Mike Fichter. “Coercion is a real problem, especially for women and girls who are victims of domestic abuse and human trafficking –

and women who feel powerless to fight aggressive pressure to have an abortion. And this new law has a lot of safeguards that have never existed before in Indiana statute.”

The full list of safeguards include:

- A woman must be asked at least 18 hours before an abortion, in a private setting, if she is being coerced into having an abortion.
- If coercion is suspected, she must be informed that coercion is illegal.
- She must also be informed that a demand by the father to have an abortion does not relieve him of financial responsibilities if she wants to continue her pregnancy and parent her baby. He would still be responsible for child support.
- Suspected victims of coerced abortion must be provided with information about assistance, counseling, protective services, access to a phone if they need to make a private call, and access to an alternative exit from the facility.
- A mandatory reporter must report every instance of coerced abortion to law enforcement.
- An abortion on a woman who is a suspected victim of coercion cannot be done during the 24-hour period after a report is made to law enforcement.
- Law enforcement is required to immediately initiate an investigation into the reported coercion.

“We know women can face tremendous outside pressure from their partners or family to make the life-changing decision to end their pregnancy,” State Representative Joanna King said. “We crafted this law to protect these women from coercion, and give them an opportunity to escape a bad situation and connect to resources that can help.”

A study of 1,000 women in the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons, found that 75 percent of survey participants who had an abortion said they experienced “at least subtle forms of pressure to terminate their pregnancies.”

Among Indiana’s more than 100 pregnancy assistance centers, their directors know that traffickers bring women and girls into their facilities for free pregnancy tests before going the route of an abortion.

And statistics show that more than half of trafficking victims have had at least one abortion.

According to a report from The Charlotte Lozier Institute, 71 percent of women trapped in trafficking got pregnant at least once; 21 percent got pregnant five or more times; 55 percent had at least one abortion; and 30 percent reported multiple abortions.

“Protecting Hoosier women against a coerced abortion is an important step in upholding human dignity,” State Senator Liz Brown said. “HEA 1217 implements safeguards to ensure

women pressured into ending a pregnancy can protect themselves and their child, and I am pleased to have sponsored a law that will make Indiana a safer place for women.”

Annually, more than 8,000 babies are aborted in Indiana each year, with nearly 3,000 of those preborn children being babies of color. Since Roe was decided 50 years ago, medical science has proven that unborn babies have a heartbeat, develop brainwave activity, can hear, develop noses, mouths, fingernails, organs and nervous system, and can kick, grasp objects and hiccup – all well before 15 weeks of development.

Since 1973, almost 540,000 babies have been aborted in Indiana.

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