



25 Canyon Road, Morgantown, WV 26508 ~ 304.594.9845 ~ info@wvforlife.org ~ wvforlife.org

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For more information contact:

Karen Cross, WVFL Legis. Coordinator (202) 200-1973

Wanda Franz, Ph.D., WVFL President (304) 599-0768

## WEST VIRGINIA GOVERNOR JUSTICE SIGNS TWO PRO-LIFE BILLS

West Virginia becomes the 31<sup>st</sup> state to enact a meaningful Parent's Right to Know Act. HB 2002, was successfully amended in the Senate and passed on the last day of the session by a 28-6 vote. The House concurred a few hours later by a vote of 82-17. The bill closes a loophole in the 1984 law that allowed for a second doctor to okay a minor girl's abortion without her parent's knowledge. The bill still allows for a judicial bypass in abusive situations. Governor Jim Justice approved the bill on April 26.

"We are pleased that the governor agreed with the huge bipartisan majority that parents have a right to know when their minor daughter is having an abortion, an invasive surgical procedure," said Karen Cross, West Virginians for Life Legislative Coordinator. She continued, "Children don't understand the long-term emotional, psychological, and physical consequences of making this major life-changing decision."

Many of these laws have been in effect for decades and have been upheld in the courts. As the Supreme Court has observed, "[t]he medical, emotional, and psychological consequences of an abortion are serious and can be lasting; this is particularly so when the patient is immature." [*H.L. v. Matheson*, 450 U.S. 398, 411 (1981).]

Additionally, the Telemedicine Bill, HB 2509, was signed by the governor on the same day after having passed unanimously in the Senate on Tuesday, April 4, and in the House on March 6. The House vote to concur three days later was nearly unanimous.

HB 2509 permits a physician to prescribe certain controlled substances when using telemedicine technologies. Because the Telemedicine Bill would have expanded abortion throughout the state, it was amended in the Senate to prevent long-distance prescription of drugs for the purpose of causing abortion. According to news stories, abortion proponents made it clear that they wanted to use the bill as a means of expanding abortion in West Virginia.

"Because it is irresponsible to prescribe chemicals long-distance for women to abort without medical supervision, West Virginians for Life (WVFL) is elated the bill passed as amended." said WVFL President Wanda Franz. "These women need the presence of a doctor because chemical abortions trigger an especially intense experience of child birth, which can include severe abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea with high amounts of bleeding. Women have been traumatized by the experience of delivering their own dead baby. Deaths have occurred world-wide from severe infections, which may be due to suppression of the immune system by the chemicals used in the abortion."

Both bills will take effect 90 days from passage.

*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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