

THE FACTS

- **Parent's Right to Know** would close loopholes in a 1984 West Virginia law. It would require that one parent or guardian be notified in person by mail before a minor child could have her abortion.
- **Parent's Right to Know** does not require *consent*, it only requires that one parent be *notified*. There is a judicial bypass for those girls who are in abusive situations.
- 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).]
- **Parent's Right to Know** will protect minor girls from being taken for secret abortions by sexual predators.
- States that have passed parental notice legislation have seen both their teen abortion and teen pregnancy rates drop. [Id. at 108-09 (citing Robert Ohsfeldt and Stephen Gohmann, *Do Parental Involvement Laws Reduce Adolescent Abortion Rates?*, CONTEMPORARY ECONOMIC POLICY 12(2): 65, 74 (1994)).]
- 30 states have similar laws, most of which have been in effect for decades.
- **Parent's Right to Know** laws have been upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court. [See *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania vs. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833, 895, 970-71 (1992).]
- Polls have shown that nearly 70% of the public supports parental notice laws. [CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll, Nov. 2005]

Parent's Right To Know

S.B. 424 and H.B. 2002



We need to protect our minor daughters. This West Virginia teen could be your daughter. She could be contemplating an invasive surgical procedure...and you don't know about it. Abortion is her choice. Under current state law, teens may not have their ears pierced or take an aspirin in schools without parent's consent. Loopholes in the current state law allow a second abortionist to authorize secret abortions on underage girls -- for any reason, not just rape or incest. Sexual predators can use these loopholes to seek abortions for their victims to conceal their crimes.

Dawn Ravenell, a 13-year-old girl from Queens, New York, died tragically in 1985 after undergoing a legal abortion. According to the abortion clinic records, Dawn awoke from the anesthesia during the middle of the abortion and began gagging and choking before going into cardiac arrest. A plastic airway was inserted in her throat and she was again sedated. In the recovery room after the abortion, she awoke, began gagging on the unremoved airway, and went into cardiac collapse. She was rushed to a New York hospital where she later died. In 1990, a jury awarded \$1.225 million dollars to her family. The Ravenells said they pursued the suit not for the money but for justice. "I wanted to be sure that another child would not suffer the way Dawn did," Mrs. Ravenell said.¹

New York has no parental involvement law so Dawn's parents were never told about their daughter's pregnancy or abortion. "It was a horrible situation," said the family attorney, Thomas Principe. "Here you have a frightened kid in what was really an abortion factory. She was treated like a piece on an assembly line."²

¹ Hermann, "\$1.225M awarded in girl's abort death," *New York Daily News*, Tuesday, December 11, 1990, p. 13.
See also, Carillo, "\$1.2M won't bring her back," *New York Post*, Tuesday, December 11, 1990, p.1. APP BB.

² Id.

West  for Life
Virginians

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