

Answers to Senator Sessions' Questions
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1. The Alabama legislature, like the legislatures of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Wisconsin, has passed a hospital admitting privilege law that requires abortion doctors to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals, typically within 30 miles of where they perform abortions. These laws, which were passed to protect the health and safety of the pregnant mother by ensuring that abortion doctors are properly qualified and credentialed, have been challenged by abortion advocates and the Supreme Court is expected to rule on their constitutionality this term.
 - a. If the Supreme Court strikes down this law, what, in your opinion, can Congress do to prevent another horrible situation like that of Dr. Kermit Gosnell's clinic in Philadelphia?

Congress has before it two bills that would greatly reduce the incidences of criminals like Dr. Gosnell. These are the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act and the Abortion Survivors Act. Both bills draw a clear line between abortion and infanticide, and recognize that a pain-capable unborn child of more than 20 weeks deserves protection from late term abortion. Dr. Gosnell participated in dangerous late term abortions and when those abortions were performed unsuccessfully, babies born alive were killed. These bills would protect women from dangerous late term abortions, and a 20 week bright-line rule would set a resounding standard against infanticide by protecting fully-formed, pain-capable, unborn children of more than 20 weeks. The United States is one of only seven countries that allows the practice of late term elective abortion to continue past 20 weeks, and this is a practice that simply must end for the good of women and the unborn.

- b. Assuming the Supreme Court upholds this law, what, in your opinion, can Congress do to further promote the health and safety of pregnant mothers?

Congress can continue to support legislation that provides mothers alternatives to abortion. A step in the right direction would be defunding Planned Parenthood, the biggest abortion provider in this country, and directing those resources to clinics that help women through pregnancy, breastfeeding, and parenthood. Hospital admitting privileges and ambulatory surgical center requirements are a great safeguard for protecting women and ensure they receive the medical attention they need when complications arise from abortion. In addition to these provisions, oversight of abortion clinics needs to continue with constant vigilance to avoid devastating horrors like those that occurred in the abortion clinic of Kermit Gosnell. Reporting and abortion clinic inspections need to be enforced and maintained to maintain a high standard of care for women.