



## Bioethics Public Policy Report May 30, 2023

### State by State

- The [North Carolina](#) legislature has voted to override Democrat Governor Roy Cooper's veto of a bill that bans abortion after twelve weeks. The override vote was 72–48 in the House and 30–20 in the Senate. In addition to the twelve week limit (reduced from twenty weeks), the bill includes reporting requirements for abortion, conscience protections for health care professionals, informed consent requirements, and a 72-hour waiting period. It also includes the Born-Alive Survivors Act, funding to support mothers, and adoption incentives.
- [South Carolina](#) Circuit Court Judge Clifton Newman has granted a request by Planned Parenthood and others to block enforcement of the state's new six-week abortion ban. The temporary restraining order came less than one day after Governor Henry McMaster (R) signed into law the Fetal Heartbeat and Protection from Abortion Act. The law bans abortion after a child's heartbeat can be detected. Violators face up to two years in prison, a \$10,000 fine and revocation of their medical license. Governor McMaster responded by filing an emergency appeal to the State Supreme Court. Click [here](#) and [here](#) for further information.
- The [Nebraska](#) legislature has passed, and Governor Jim Pillen (R) has signed LB574 or the "Let The Grow Act." The new law bans abortion after the first trimester although it includes exceptions for rape, incest, and the life of the mother. Previously, abortion was legal in Nebraska up to twenty weeks gestation.
- [Nebraska's](#) "Let them Grow Act" also protects children up to age nineteen from so-called gender transitioning. Nebraska is now the eighteenth state in the country to ban interventions (puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and surgical procedures) for the so-called transitioning of minors. For additional information, click [here](#) and [here](#).
- [Florida](#) Governor Ron DeSantis (R) has signed into law SB 254 which prohibits "the prescription or administration" of puberty blockers, hormones, or "any medical procedure, including a surgical procedure, to affirm a person's perception of his or her sex if that perception is inconsistent with the person's sex." Violators face the loss of their medical license, liability in civil suits, and felony charges up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. The bill also bars the use of public funds for so-called transitioning procedures and requires any facility performing such procedures on adults to register and provide information about their harmful effects. Texas and Missouri have similar bills close to being signed into law.
- In addition to SB 254, [Florida](#) Governor DeSantis signed into law three additional bills that counter gender ideology. HB 1069 protects students and teachers from having to "declare their pronouns in school or be forced to use pronouns not based on biological sex." SB 1438 also prohibits drag shows and other inappropriate performances with minors present, which caused the [cancellation](#) of Tampa's so-called pride festival. Finally, HB 1521 ensures women's safety by requiring "educational institutions, detention facilities, correctional institutes, juvenile facilities and public buildings with

a restroom, locker room, or changing facility” to “have separate facilities for men and women based on biological sex.”

### **Federal Courts**

- Two federal courts in California have [ruled](#) that churches in the state cannot be forced to cover abortion in their health insurance plans. Both rulings maintained that the state’s abortion-coverage mandate violated the plaintiff churches’ first amendment rights, bringing an end to two lawsuits that have been moving through the court system for years. Alliance Defending Freedom Senior Counsel Jeremiah Galus stated that the courts’ decision “protects the churches’ freedom to operate according to their religious beliefs, which includes their belief in the sanctity of unborn lives.” In addition to losing the cases, California will pay \$1.4 million toward the churches’ legal fees. Click [here](#) for additional information.

### **National**

- After rescinding its invitation to the so-called sisters of perpetual indulgence—an anti-Catholic, pro-lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, etc. advocacy organization—the [Los Angeles Dodgers](#) baseball team has apologized to the group and are now once again welcoming it to participate in the team’s pride night on June 16th. Click [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) for more information.
- Following on the LA Dodgers controversy, Ashleigh Aitken, the Catholic mayor of Anaheim, California, has [invited](#) the so-called sisters of perpetual indulgence to be her personal guests at the Los Angeles Angels’ pride night on June 7th.
- Planned Parenthood has announced that its national office will be [laying off](#) between ten and twenty percent of its staff, approximately eighty people.

### **International**

- A government agency in [Norway](#) is recommending that the country revise its so-called gender transition guidelines for minors after a review found the existing standards were based on inadequate scientific evidence. The Norwegian Healthcare Investigation Board maintained that “research-based knowledge for gender-affirming treatment (hormonal and surgical), is insufficient and the long-term effects are little known.” In addition, the lack of evidence-based knowledge is “particularly true for the teenage population where the stability of their gender incongruence is also not known.”

### **Latest “Bioethics on Air” Podcast**

- Episode 113: [Countering the Abortion Narrative – Part 1](#). Dr. Monique Ruberu, OB/GYN joins Joe Zalot to discuss the claim that abortion is health care, pro-life interventions for pregnancy complications, and the true impact of abortion on her patients.

### **Of Note**

- “For years, California officials, in collaboration with Planned Parenthood, have unconstitutionally targeted faith-based organizations. This is a significant victory for the churches we represent, the conscience rights of their members, and other religious organizations that shouldn’t be ordered by the government to violate some of their deepest faith convictions.”— [Jeremiah Galus](#) of Alliance Defending Freedom on two

court decisions ruling that California cannot force churches to cover abortion in their health care plans.

***Sharing the News:*** If you have public policy news that you would like to share with the NCBC, or if you have colleagues who would like to receive the Bioethics Public Policy Report, please contact Joe Zalot at 215-871-2014 or [jzalot@ncbcenter.org](mailto:jzalot@ncbcenter.org). Previous editions of this report are available through the [Public Policy](#) page of the NCBC website.

***Sharing the Resources:*** If you enjoy receiving the Bioethics Public Policy Report and would like to support its continued publication, please consider making a [donation](#) to the NCBC.

The National Catholic Bioethics Center webpage, available at <http://www.ncbcenter.org/>, is a significant resource for bioethics information. NCBC bioethicists are also on-call for consultation twenty-four hours a day, seven days per week, at 215-877-2660.