

2016: A Year of Pro-Life Progress in Ohio

Despite some setbacks and ongoing challenges, our own state saw significant progress toward respect for human life. Some of the highlights:

- November elections returned strong pro-life majorities to both houses of the Ohio legislature.
- Defunding Planned Parenthood. Would eliminate over \$1 million in government grants to the nation's largest abortion-provider. Passed by the Ohio legislature and signed by Governor Kasich, but remains tied up in a federal lawsuit.
- Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. Passed the legislature and signed by Kasich. Will ban abortions after 20 weeks gestation.
- Heartbeat Bill. Passed by the legislature but vetoed by Kasich. Would ban abortions after detection of a heartbeat (as early as six weeks into pregnancy).
- Unborn Child Dignity Act. Would require humane treatment of human remains following abortion. Passed by the Ohio Senate.
- Classifying Assisted Suicide as a Felony. Passed by the legislature and signed by Kasich. Strengthens legal protection for the elderly and dying.
- 2016 Department of Health Report (for 2015) shows a total of 20,976 abortions in Ohio, a decline of 210 over the previous year and the lowest number since 1976.

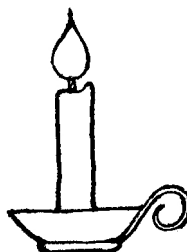
Compiled from various sources, including Ohio Right to Life press releases and annual report.

Join Us for Pro-Life Vigil

To commemorate the 44th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion across the United States, Right to Life will hold its annual Candlelight Vigil on Sunday, January 22, beginning at 7pm.

The event will take place at the courthouse in Sidney (entrance at southeast corner). The ceremony will include a brief program of prayer and reflection followed by a procession around the court square. Attendees are encouraged to bring wind-protected candles and to dress appropriately for the outdoor procession.

Come help us illuminate the darkness with the light of life!



Thrift Shop Report

October

278 Customers
39 Work-to-Earn certificates
1 Free unit (diapers)

November

240 Customers
33 Work-to-Earn certificates
11 Free units (diapers, wipes; clothing to fire victims)

Planned Parenthood Closed 27 Clinics During 2016

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The nation's largest abortion provider, Planned Parenthood, closed 27 facilities in 2016, One News Now reports. The abortion chain currently operates 624 facilities, according to American Life League. "We are happy to report that they closed 27 more facilities in 2016, and they only opened eight new ones – so a net loss of 19 Planned Parenthood facilities in 12 months," ALL Executive Director Jim Sedlak told One News Now. "That's the way we like to see it go." Sedlak said Planned Parenthood once operated 938 facilities across the U.S., but today their numbers are down by one-third.

Planned Parenthood's abortion numbers have remained fairly steady in the past few years (its 2016 report is not out yet), despite so many of its facilities closing. This and other factors indicate the abortion chain is concentrating more on its money-making abortion business than ever before. At the same time as it closed facilities and received half a billion taxpayer dollars, Planned Parenthood performed fewer non-abortion services, according to its annual reports from the past several years. From 2010 to 2014, Planned Parenthood's annual reports showed dramatic decreases in the actual health services it provides, including breast cancer screenings, pap tests, prenatal care and STD treatments.

Abortion is a big money-maker for Planned Parenthood. Many of the facilities that it closed in the past few years did not perform abortions. Instead, they referred women to other facilities for abortions. One News Now noted that many of the 2016 closings involved facilities that were not making a profit.

Abortion facilities across the U.S. have been closing at a historic rate in the past few years as more women are empowered with information and resources to help them choose life for their unborn babies. In 2016, 31 abortion clinics closed, bringing the total number of abortion facilities in the U.S. down to 731, according to Operation Rescue.

By Micaiah Bilger, LifeNews.com, December 28, 2016. Edited for space.



Winter Parade Float

Thank you to Steve and Carol Dircksen and the John and Jamie Schmiesing family for participating with the Right to Life float in the Sidney Winter Parade in November.

May you and yours enjoy a peaceful and prosperous

*In memory of **Angela Schroeder**, and
Norma Middendorf, lifetime member and former president of Shelby County Right to Life,
In whose names memorial donations were made to Right to Life.
+ May they rest in peace +*



That *Roe v. Wade* be overturned and the 44-year legal regime of abortion-on-demand in our nation come to an end.

French Court Rules: Down Syndrome Children Not Allowed to Smile on TV

On November 10, the Conseil d'Etat ruled it "inappropriate" to show happy children with Down syndrome on TV, as that sight could "trouble" women who chose not to give birth to their disabled children. With this pronouncement, the French judges upheld a previous decision by the CSA (*Conseil Supérieur de l'audiovisuel* – equivalent of the US Federal Communication Commission). In 2014, CSA banned the diffusion of the video "Dear Future Mom," an award-winning short movie that was released on World Down Syndrome Day and broadcasted by some French media outlets.

The video was meant to sensitize parents about the reality of a life with Down syndrome. Answering to the fears of a pregnant woman whose unborn baby had just been diagnosed with this genetic disorder, some adolescents appear on the screen. For two minutes, they tell their "future mums" that they can do everything other kids can do. They explain that they can read, go to school, fix bicycles, and, eventually, even pay their own rent. They are happy to be born, and they simply say it. This video was a response to the legitimate fears expressed by disability rights advocates, and shared by a good number of "unbiased" commentators, about the potential extinction of people with Down syndrome. As of today, 90% of pregnancies that are diagnosed with Down syndrome are aborted worldwide. In France, where prenatal screening is enshrined in public policy, the number increases to 96%.

Regardless of the honorable aim of this video, and in spite of the international calls for "inclusion" and "acceptance of diversity," a few negative reactions by some "troubled" French viewers were enough to stop the screening. The administrative judges rejected the appeals that were filed against CSA's decision by the young adults born with trisomy 21, and by two associations that defend the rights of individuals with Down syndrome.

From a legal perspective, while undermining the dignity of people with disability, whose mere appearance may "trouble" the conscience of their prospective mothers, the ban is a limitation of their freedom of expression. According to Éric Morain, an expert lawyer in the media field, "The decision of the Conseil d'Etat states that freedom of expression of individuals with trisomy must bow down to the right to have an abortion." Morain explains also that this judgment is unclear in that, on the one hand, it admits that the video serves a "general interest," as required by the French law regulating media advertisements; but, on the other hand, it holds that its broadcasting is also "inappropriate," being "susceptible of harming the consciences of women who, as provided by the law, made different life choices." In brief, according to the French Court, the possibility of regret that this ad may cause for a woman who chose to abort her baby is *per se* sufficient to annihilate its "general interest" feature.

Jerome Lejeune foundation USA – which was one of the appellants – announced its intention to bring the case to the European Court of Human Rights, "to defend the rights of expression of people born with trisomy 21, free from censorship." It may be helpful to remind courts, as well as fearful mothers, that, according to the surveys, individuals with Down syndrome report comparatively high levels of personal satisfaction. 99% of people born with this genetic condition report feeling happy with their lives. 99% of these people's parents say they love them, and 97% of people with Down syndrome say they like who they are.

By Marianna Orlandi, Ph.D., November 30, 2016. Orlandi writes for C-Fam. This article first appeared in the Friday Fax, an internet report published weekly by C-Fam (Center for Family & Human Rights), a New York and Washington DC-based research institute (<https://c-fam.org/>). This article appears with permission and has been edited for space.

Bizarre Celebrity Lawsuit Highlights Reproductive Tech Dangers

The two daughters of actress Sofia Vergara and her ex-fiance Nick Loeb filed a lawsuit this week to ask a court to grant them a right to live. The girls, Emma and Isabella, are embryos who were created through in vitro fertilization before the couple split. The lawsuit, filed in Louisiana this week, lists the two as plaintiffs in the case, according to news site, Page Six.

In a high profile legal battle, Vergara and Loeb have been sparring over the fate of the two frozen embryos – their daughters. Though the girls are in the earliest stages of life, they are already human beings who have their own unique DNA. Loeb wants the girls to have a chance to live, while the “Modern Family” actress wants them to remain frozen or be destroyed. A source close to Loeb explained that he didn’t want to see the embryos destroyed because he believes that life begins at conception. Page Six reports more about the new lawsuit:

The new lawsuit contends that Emma and Isabella, by not being born, have been deprived of an inheritance from a trust that has been created for them in Louisiana, according to sources. It asks that the frozen embryos be given to Loeb so that they can live and receive the trust set up for them, which would fund, among other things, their health care and education, sources said.

The lawsuit also argues that Vergara’s parental rights should be terminated, and Loeb given full custody of the girls, according to the report. Sources told the news outlet that he would like to have them implanted into a surrogate mother. According to the lawsuit, Vergara, who says she is Catholic, previously told Loeb that she believed the embryos should never be destroyed. The suit claims she broke that oral agreement with him.

By Micaiah Bilger, LifeNews.com, December 7, 2016. Edited for space.