



POLITICS 03/26/2015 01:25 pm ET | Updated Mar 26, 2015

Gynecologist Calls Abortion Reversal Bill 'Downright Offensive'



By Laura Bassett



Arizona Republican Gov. Doug Ducey signs the American Civics Act into law during a bill signing ceremony at the Capitol, Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2015, in Phoenix. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

The Arizona State Legislature passed a bill on Wednesday that requires doctors to tell women seeking abortions about an experimental “abortion reversal” procedure that has not been tested or studied by the mainstream medical community.

New York City-based OB-GYN Kathleen Morrell, an abortion provider and reproductive justice advocate with Physicians for Reproductive Health, said the bill is “downright offensive” to doctors, because it implies that doctors are not already counseling patients about their decision to have an abortion and practicing evidence-based medicine. She said she always counsels women before they decide to have an abortion, and when a woman seems unsure, she advises her to wait a week before having the procedure.

“What’s downright offensive to me as a doctor is that it implies that we need a statement saying that a woman needs to be protected from her own uncertainty,” Morrell told The Huffington Post. “We as providers already have evidence-based protocols and relationships



certainly. I think that the ultimate goal of this legislation is to get in between a woman and a doctor and create some kind of stigma and uncertainty in that relationship.”

The “abortion reversal” provision in the bill applies to medication abortions, which require a woman to take a dose of the medication mifepristone — more commonly known as RU-486 — and, days later, a dose of the drug misoprostol. George Delgado, a doctor who opposes abortion, [said in a 2012 study in the journal Annals of Pharmacotherapy](#) that he had developed a way to reverse the abortion procedure before the woman had taken her dose of misoprostol, in case she changed her mind after taking the first one. Delgado reported that he injected six women with the hormone progesterone after they took their first dose of abortion medication, and that four of them went on to have live births.

The problem with Delgado’s study, Morrell said, is that mifepristone only causes a complete abortion on its own about 40 percent of the time, because it is meant to be used in combination with the second medication. So the fact that four out of six women in Delgado’s study went on to have live births does not necessarily mean the progesterone was responsible for keeping the abortion from being completed. And there is no other research to back up Delgado’s study or to test the safety of his experimental procedure.

Nonetheless, Arizona legislators are trying to require doctors to tell women that a medication abortion can be reversed once it’s been started. Supporters of the bill, which passed the State House and Senate this week, said the bill is only intended to inform women of their options.

“It does not dictate any practice of medicine,” state [Rep. Eddie Farnsworth \(R\)](#) said during a debate on the House floor this week. “It is simply disclosure.”

But Morrell said the bill “legislates against evidence-based medicine.”

“A politician is requiring me to offer you something that’s untested,” she said. “I do not offer my patients untested things. I wait for the evidence to come out as to whether it’s safe and effective.”

Morrell said she has provided abortions to hundreds of women over the course of her career, and not one of them has changed her mind in the middle of an abortion procedure. “The bill treats women like their thought processes aren’t complete, as if women aren’t thoughtful,” she said. “Women are thoughtful, and most women are sure of their decisions.”



opposes abortion rights but has not indicated whether he will sign this particular bill.

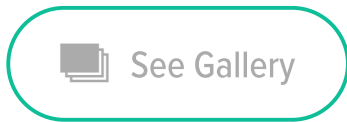
Do you have information you want to share with HuffPost? [Here's how.](#)



BEFORE YOU GO

PHOTO GALLERY

Politicians Mess Up Science



Laura Bassett

Senior Politics Reporter, HuffPost

[Suggest a correction](#)

MORE:

Politics News

Abortion Reversal

MOST SHARED

Conservative

Samantha Bee

The Trailer For

Kim Kardashian



Donald Trump's Post-Acquittal Era

Escape From A Vengeful Donald Trump

Of Thrones' Show Is Intense

And It's Jaw-Dropping

WHAT'S HOT

21 Clever Uses For Baking Soda Around The House

Mike Bloomberg Once Blamed End Of 'Redlining' For 2008 Economic Collapse

Don Lemon Exposes The Chilling Lesson Donald Trump Learned From His Acquittal

Trevor Noah Pukes Up The Grossest Presidential Campaign Analogy

American Bar Association Goes After Trump For Blasting Roger Stone Sentencing On Twitter

Woman Calls Out American Airlines Over Passenger Punching Her Reclined Seat



NEWS

ENTERTAINMENT

COMMUNITIES

VIDEO

HUFFPOST

ADVERTISE

POLITICS

LIFE

HUFFPOST PERSONAL

NEWSLETTERS

ABOUT US

ABOUT OUR ADS



[ARCHIVE](#)

[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

[HUFFPOST PRESS ROOM](#)

[USER AGREEMENT](#)

[COMMENT POLICY](#)

[COUPONS](#)

[Privacy dashboard](#)

Part of HuffPost Politics. ©2020 Verizon Media. All rights reserved.