
NC Doctors Sue to End Mandatory Ultrasounds Before Abortions

By [Stoyan Zaimov](#) ⁽¹⁾, Christian Post Reporter

Physicians in North Carolina are challenging an abortion law in court that makes it a requirement for women to receive an ultrasound before terminating their pregnancy.

"There's no medical basis to [the ultrasound requirement] whatsoever," said Dr. Serina Floyd, an obstetrician and gynecologist at Duke Medicine and a plaintiff in this case, [The Duke Chronicle](#) ⁽¹²⁾ reported. "It's entirely ethical, moral and political and not in any way medically based."

The Woman's Right to Know Act law, which went into effect in Oct, 2011 and carries the ultrasound requirement, is intended to have mothers hear and see their unborn children before making a decision on whether or not to have an abortion. Groups such as Planned Parenthood, the American Civil Liberties Union and the Center for Reproductive Rights, who are backing the N.C. injunction against the law, are saying that the clause should be removed.

"There are alternatives to abortion, including keeping the baby or giving up the baby for adoption," the state-mandated script reads. "If you decide to continue the pregnancy the father of the baby is liable to assist in the support of the child, even if he has agreed to pay for the abortion."

U.S. District Judge Catherine Eagles is going to be faced with making a decision in the trial, which is expected to begin in January. The case is specifically concerned with the ultrasound requirement of the cause, rather than the entire Woman's Right to Know Act. The law passed in both the House and the Senate at a state General Assembly in June 2011. Gov. Bev Perdue's subsequent veto was overturned by the Senate, giving the law the green light for October.

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Physicians like Floyd are insisting that the ultrasound clause only makes life more difficult for women who are already faced with a tough decision, and the law's clear intent is to try and change their minds.

"The idea that we should take something that is already difficult and painful and say, 'Not only is this difficult and painful, but we are really going to up the ante and make you pay psychologically by rubbing something in your face because we don't like the decision you're making,' I think it's damaging, paternalistic and imposing," William Meyer, an associate clinical professor in the departments of obstetrics and gynecology and psychiatry, told The Chronicle.

Currently, 35 states require women to get some type of counseling before they can be allowed to undergo an abortion, while 26 states have a time period that the mother must wait before making a decision about her unborn baby.

Meyer said that the counseling could cause "psychological damaging effects" for the women and expressed his opposition to all mandated counseling.

"What might be right for one person might be damaging for another," he said. "These are vexing and complicated issues and any attempt to simplify them and say, 'What is right for one might be necessary for everyone' – well, I don't think we can go there."

Floyd added: "All over the country, states are trying hard to further restrict access to abortions, and North Carolina jumped on that bandwagon when it passed the legislation."

Supporters of the law, however, have said that the ultrasound helps the mother see the life and death decision she is about to make, both for herself and her baby, and helps women make informed decisions.

"The ultrasound is a window into the womb and the opportunity for this mother to get scientifically accurate information about a procedure that is going to have great consequences for her and for her child. It's a life or death decision," Barbara Holt, president of North Carolina Right to Life, said when the clause was passed last October.

Rep. Nelson Dollar, R-Wake, added that the purpose behind the law is to reduce the number of abortions in North Carolina.

"We don't believe that information is really being provided," Dollar said, according to [WRAL.com](#)⁽¹³⁾. "By ensuring that information will be provided, women can make an informed choice."

"Mothers and their unborn children are the victors today because this law would protect a mother's right to receive vital information prior to making a life or death decision about her unborn child," [said Mary Spaulding Balch](#)⁽¹⁴⁾, director of state legislation for the National Right to Life Committee, when the law came into effect. "With final passage of this law, no longer will mothers in North Carolina be left to the one-sided sales-promoting information provided by an industry that is in the business of killing unborn children".

North Carolina [abortion statistics](#)⁽¹⁵⁾ show that there were over 30,000 abortions performed in the state in 2010 – a number which has declined every year since the 35,000 such procedures in 2006.

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