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Pueblo Colorado City Council Kills Measure to Protect Babies From Abortions

State | Micaiah Bilger | Dec 13, 2022 | 10:43AM | Pueblo, Colorado

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The City Council of Pueblo, Colorado narrowly blocked a pro-life ordinance Monday after two council members [attempted to censor pro-life advocates](#) from speaking in favor of the life-saving measure.

Without listening to the more than 100 people who signed up to speak, Council President Heather Graham also told her constituents that they should move to another state if they oppose abortions, [The Gazette reports](#).

Colorado allows unborn babies to be aborted for any reason up to birth, and Pueblo residents recently learned that late-term abortionist Leroy Carhart [plans to open a new abortion facility](#) in their city.

Councilwoman Regina Maestri introduced the ordinance earlier this fall after many people approached her asking how to stop the new abortion business. The ordinance would require abortion practitioners to follow federal law, which bans the distribution of drugs and devices for the purpose of aborting unborn babies.

However, on Monday, the council voted 4-3 to indefinitely table the [ordinance](#), [KOAA reports](#). More than 100 people signed up to speak about the proposal, but, because the council tabled it, they never got the chance.

Graham made the motion, and Dennis Flores, Sarah Martinez and Vicente Martinez Ortega joined her in blocking the ordinance. Council members Maestri, Larry Atencio and Lori Winner voted against tabling.

ACTION ALERT: To complain to the city council about the vote, [Contact the Pueblo City Council](#).

Graham told pro-life Pueblo residents that abortion is a state legislative issue, not a local one, and they should move away if they do not like Colorado law, which allows unborn babies to be aborted for any reason up to birth.

“I would suggest if you want to ban abortion, take it up with the state legislators, or, quite frankly, you move out of Colorado because the city council is not the arena to be bringing this forward,” Graham said.

She also faced legal trouble for allegedly trying to [censor pro-life advocates from speaking about the measure](#).

Last week, lawyers with the ACLJ sent a legal demand letter to the city council after Graham and Martinez “canceled the pro-life speakers, but specifically still allowed the pro-abortion witnesses’ hour-long presentation to remain on the schedule,” the lawyers said. “This is blatant and egregious viewpoint discrimination.”

The pro-life ordinance had strong public support. In November, more than 135 people, most of whom were pro-life, attended a city council meeting to voice their opinions, including Mark Lee Dickson, director with Right to Life of East Texas and founder of the Sanctuary Cities for the Unborn initiative.

He told the city council that more than 60 cities across the U.S. have passed similar ordinances to protect unborn babies, and all of the legal challenges against them thus far have failed.

KOAA reports more:

Legal experts who helped write the ordinance and the city attorney gave conflicting opinions about the legality of the anti-abortion ordinance. Daniel Kogovsek, Pueblo’s city attorney, said the ordinance would not hold up against the Reproductive Health Equity Act (RHEA), the state’s law already in place reaffirming the right to abortion in Colorado. The legal counsel for the ordinance, including Jonathon Mitchell, the former solicitor general for Texas, and Josh Craddock, an attorney in Colorado, argued the 1873 federal law written in the ordinance banning the shipping and receiving of abortion-related paraphernalia would supersede any state law.

“There’s no conflict between this proposed ordinance and Colorado state law because the ordinance is simply requiring compliance with supreme federal law and would trump any kind of provision that might appear in the Colorado Reproductive Health Equity Act,” said Mitchell.

Carhart, who also runs Clinics for Abortion and Reproductive Excellence (CARE) abortion facilities in Nebraska and Maryland, is under investigation by Nebraska health officials after a 35-year-old patient [accused him of nearly killing her in a botched abortion](#) in February, according to Operation Rescue. The pro-life watchdog group also recorded evidence of [27 life-threatening medical emergencies](#) at his two abortion facilities since 2012, including [one woman who died along with her baby after a late-term abortion](#) in 2013.

Many believe Carhart is moving to Colorado because he may be forced to close his Nebraska abortion facility soon. The Nebraska city where he practices also is considering a pro-life ordinance, and the state legislature may pass legislation to protect unborn babies this winter.

A growing grassroots movement is working to protect unborn babies at the local level. To-date, more than 60 [cities in Texas, Ohio, Nebraska](#) and [New Mexico](#) have passed Sanctuary City for the Unborn ordinances that protect unborn babies by banning abortions and/or abortion facilities within city limits.

Other cities and counties have passed pro-life resolutions, which are statements of support but not enforceable law, that recognize unborn babies' right to life. In Arkansas, 19 counties and 10 cities and towns have passed pro-life resolutions, [according to Family Council of Arkansas](#). Several North Carolina counties [passed pro-life resolutions recently](#), too, and the New Mexico county commissioners of Otero approved a resolution in July [condemning the pro-abortion laws in their state](#).

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