

# TEXAS NEWS

**RIGHT TO LIFE**

*Information  
you won't see  
anywhere else.*

JANUARY 2017



**INSIDE**  
Activism Day  
in Austin  
"The Sweet Spot"

# Join Texas Right to Life Young Adults for 2017 Y'ALL Activism Days!

Texas Right to Life wants **YOU** to join our Young Adult Life Link (Y'ALL) on one of two days during spring 2017 to bring **YOUR** Pro-Life convictions to the State Capitol. No matter your age or whether you are a small business owner, a stay-at-home parent, an engineer, a teacher, or a web designer, the Y'ALL Activism Days are for you.

Texas Right to Life wants every Pro-Lifer in the state to understand the process of shepherding a bill into law, the importance of various committees in the Texas House and Senate, and the biggest hurdles to the passage of life-saving legislation in Austin. Visiting the Capitol also provides moral encouragement to our legislative staff staked in Austin for the legislative session, which lasts five months or more.

On Wednesday, March 15, 2017, and Saturday, April 22, 2017, you can experience firsthand the intricate process of passing bills to save innocent human Life in Texas. You will be equipped with tools to effectively communicate with your elected officials and effectuate change in our great state.

When people speak about the Sonogram Law that was passed in 2011 or the Pro-Life Omnibus Bill passed in 2013, most do not have a deep understanding of the work our team of full-time lobbyists invested behind the scenes to pass these

measures. Because of their unseen efforts, abortions in Texas have plummeted.

In order to build a Culture of Life, you should understand the importance of being engaged in the legislative process.

After your time at the Capitol this spring, you will be emboldened to spread the Pro-Life message far and wide.

What you can look forward to:

- A tour of the Capitol
- A visit to an elected official's office
- Time spent with our team of full-time lobbyists for an opportunity to ask candid questions
- A taste of Austin, Texas

This experience, although potentially requiring some travel, will leave you with a lasting memory and valuable Pro-Life skills. For those who do travel from the many corners of the state to advocate in Austin on behalf of preborn babies, hospital patients, and those with disabilities this legislative session, we say **thank you**. Whether you are 18 or 78, join Texas Right to Life's young adults for these activism days. For more information, contact our Development department at 713-782-5433.

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FOR COLLEGE PRO-LIFE LEADERS**

Requirements

- Devote 50 hours per semester to on-campus Pro-Life work at your university.
- Attend two all-expense paid trainings at the Texas Right to Life HQ in Houston.
- Submit brief weekly updates.
- Start a Pro-Life group if one doesn't exist at your university.



FOR MORE INFO AND TO  
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**QUESTIONS?**

Contact: [Fellowship@TXRTL.com](mailto:Fellowship@TXRTL.com)  
713-782-5433

## *This is the “Sweet Spot”*

While Republican leaders in Washington, D.C., trip over each other to assure voters of their Pro-Life bonafides, the election of Donald J. Trump offers a reprieve from the relentless assaults on Life that have spewed from the White House since January 2009. Whether or not the President-elect meets our vision as a conservative, a Christian, or a Pro-Lifer, I am confident that he will not be calculating the erosion of free speech, religious freedoms, nor the sanctity of human Life during his every waking moment.

The task of activists, voters, and Pro-Life advocates now is to push our elected officials to move—to move aggressively, to move measures that protect our faith, our family, and our freedoms, and to move protections for the preborn. We must not assume that the Republican majority will prioritize the issues nearest and dearest to our own hearts. We must hold them accountable now more than ever.

In 2013, the Texas Legislature passed Texas Right to Life’s bill to protect preborn children who can feel pain from abortion at five months gestation. This type of law includes several components that cannot be severed from any worthy Pro-Life law:

- the pain law draws attention to the humanity of the preborn child;
- the pain law drives the cultural conversation in a positive direction;
- the pain law chips away at the foundation of *Roe v. Wade*; and
- most important, the pain law actually stops many abortions.

This law has actually saved lives in Texas.

As expected, the U.S. Congress is trying to keep up with Texas. They are

working on the Pain-Capable Preborn Child Protection Act, which is a ban at five months when the child indisputably feels pain. The challenge in Congress will be to keep the language of the bill strong and without weakening provisions. The abortion folks hate this bill. They will not launch a court challenge on this measure because the only take-away from media stories is that the child feels pain in the barbaric procedure.

Abortion executives saving for that Lamborghini would rather avoid a prolonged news cycle and the consequent, dreaded cultural conversation about the preborn child’s capacity to feel pain. Such distasteful public relations profoundly diminish the bottom line of the abortion industry.

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*If documented criminal activity of dismembering children and selling their organs for profit is not horrific enough to lose eligibility for public funding forever, America will never heal from the scourge of abortion, the blood of our preborn brothers and sisters ever staining our hearts and souls.*

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Congressmen are also now trying to out-Pro-Life each other in defunding Planned Parenthood—a feat that Texas has mostly accomplished already. The abortion giant receives more than half a billion dollars of our tax money, despite the fact that they hold double that amount in assets, are in the midst of congressional and criminal investigations, and have been documented illegally selling baby body parts.

While defunding efforts are commendable, even our strongest Pro-Life members become lost in the politics of the budget bills, the continuing resolutions, and the

reconciliation processes.

When “regular” appropriations bills fail to pass, Congress often resorts to a “continuing resolution” (known as a “CR”) to maintain operations of either all or some programs. The CR that recently cleared Congress was signed by the president on September 29, just 36 hours before the end of fiscal 2016. That CR funded all government agencies through December 9, thus requiring another budget action known as the reconciliation process to secure funding of the government for the remainder of the fiscal year.

A reconciliation bill includes changes in law recommended in a budget resolution to further fund an enterprise. In other words, to continue funding a program, new legislative strings are attached in reconciliation bills.

The leadership in the United States Senate is now promising that these reconciliation crumbs will sate us ravenous Pro-Lifers. Although the leaders of the U.S. Senate recognize the undeniable sanctity of innocent human Life, their Pro-Life zeal dissolves when addressing budget and spending rules. They will enthusiastically vote for safeguards for pregnant women and preborn children; they will vote to ban and limit abortions (and should be thanked for such actions), but they grow surprisingly befuddled about disqualifying from eligibility the very entities that commit these atrocities. After all the recent proof about the carnage inside the walls of abortion mills, after all the criminal indictments and law-breaking, the federal funding rules for abortion facilities still have not changed at all. AT. ALL.

*“Sweet” continued on page 4→*

# You Helped New Student Pro-Life Clubs Find Success

Below are updates from several campus Pro-Life groups that were either established or revitalized during the last year.

**Thank you for your continued support for these students.**

Join us in celebrating the fruits of their labors as they strengthen their Pro-Life efforts on campus!

## Hippocratic Medical Society at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

After initially being denied status as a student organization, then being told they were “too political” and must include abortion alternatives AND abortion in their mission, the Pro-Life medical students at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center nearly sought legal counsel to establish their Right to Life group on campus. The students decided to appeal peacefully once more. Finally, the medical school softened. They told the students to select a more specific name and update their mission statement to distinguish themselves from an already existing medical ethics group. After this easy change, The Hippocratic Medical Society, a now registered student organization on campus, seeks “to affirm and promote Hippocratic ideals. Therefore, we seek to promote and protect human Life from conception to natural death, apprise our community of the inherent dignity of all persons, and advocate for those who are disenfranchised, neglected, or abused.” Texas Right to Life Graduate Scholar Frances Dijeh and her co-leaders look forward to hosting Pro-Life events and speakers for their peers at the health sciences center.



Frances Dijeh, Texas Right to Life Graduate Scholar and Founder of The Hippocratic Medical Society at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

## Rattlers for Life at St. Mary's University

Rattlers for Life President and Dr. Joseph Graham Fellow Matthew Keller established the Pro-Life group at St. Mary's University in spring 2016. “We are utterly unrecognizable from last year” says Keller about their current success. “Halfway through last semester, we had already had ten meetings, worked two tabling days, hosted a bake sale fundraiser, volunteered at the Allied Women's Center (a local pregnancy center), prayed outside of Planned Parenthood multiple times, and seen 12 new, passionate members join our group.” The organization has also added a secretary position and is planning projects that include a Pro-Life chalk day and a diaper drive for local pregnancy centers.

The Pro-Life Huskies at Houston Baptist University consult embryology textbooks during a meeting regarding fetal development.

## ACU for Life at Abilene Christian University

After gaining recognition as a club in fall 2015, ACU for Life experienced a surge in membership at the beginning of fall 2016. At the activities fair in August, 150 students expressed interest in joining the club and 19 of them were interested in leadership positions. ACU for Life hosted a campus-wide movie night in November with 160 attendees, showing the Pro-Life documentary *180*. “Our members are excited to bring in a new crowd to help spread the Pro-Life message and ignite passion among the student body to bring an end to abortion,” said Gabriela Ramos-Mata, co-president of ACU for Life and Dr. Joseph Graham Fellow. In the fall semester, the group submitted a letter to the editor of the school newspaper, *The Optimist*, about the importance of voting Pro-Life.

## TCU Students for Life at Texas Christian University

Although this is the first semester TCU Students for Life is a university-recognized group, 60 students registered on the email list at the activities fair and roughly 25 students regularly attend meetings. Led by President and Dr. Joseph Graham Fellow Dani Orban, the group volunteers time with the Fort Worth Pregnancy center. In early October, TCU Students for Life held their first major on-campus event, a Cemetery of the Innocents display, to give a visual representation to the student body of how many abortions are committed in America daily. TCU Students for Life hosted another campus outreach event to include adoption advocacy to commemorate November as National Adoption Month.

## Pro-Life Huskies at Houston Baptist University

Following a slow spring 2016 semester, the Pro-Life Huskies at Houston Baptist University has grown tremendously. Under new leadership, Pro-Life Huskies' slogan is to “Engage, Educate, and Equip” the HBU student body on Pro-Life issues, focusing primarily on abortion. The Pro-Life Huskies brings their vision to life with several informational tabling displays on campus. According to president and Dr. Joseph Graham Fellow Micah Jimison, the group will “focus on fundraising to be able to create opportunities for our members to get involved by visiting the Capitol during the legislative session, and by hosting events, like a Cemetery of the Innocents display.”



## Grassroots Strategy Summit

The 85th Session of the Texas Legislature begins on January 10 and many voices will descend on Austin, jockeying for airtime inside the Capitol. Republicans will enter the Texas House of Representatives holding 95 of 150 seats, along with a majority in the State Senate; therefore, citizens across Texas must ensure solid legislation emerges from both chambers. With numbers like these, there are no excuses for stifling strong Pro-Life legislation that would actively reduce the number of preborn children killed by abortion in the state of Texas.

A knowledgeable, equipped, and committed citizenry is an integral part of Texas Right to Life's success lobbying for Pro-Life laws. To save

more lives, the ability of grassroots leaders to quickly organize is crucial when Pro-Life measures are underhandedly stalled or anti-Life measures gain traction. To best equip citizens to be effective advocates, Texas Right to Life and Empower Texans have partnered to present the Grassroots Strategy Summit.

Staff from Texas Right to Life and Empower Texans will demonstrate how to formulate a compelling advocacy plan, conduct effective meetings with elected officials and their staffs, and create strategies to define the conflict and problem needing to be resolved.

In November, the first Summit was held in Arlington, drawing more than 100 citizen activists. The attendees also

enjoyed a legislator panel over lunch with State Representatives Jonathan Stickland (R-Bedford) and Matt Rinaldi (R-Irving), and State Senator Van Taylor (R-Plano). The legislators provided activists with points on communicating effectively your message to elected officials in the Capitol and were available for Q&A.

No matter what your group's policy goals are, the building blocks taught at the Summit can be employed to advance successful advocacy in Austin. Join us! The *Grassroots Strategy Summit: Houston Edition* will take place on Saturday, January 14 at the Trinity Lutheran Church - Education Center in Downtown Houston. Please find registration information online at [www.TexasRightToLife.com](http://www.TexasRightToLife.com).

←“Sweet” continued from page 2

Just this past September in a meeting thought to be off the record, one of the U.S. senators from Texas was asked about the funding situation. His response: “I think we’re in the sweet spot with funding for Planned Parenthood.” Sweet spot? Sweet spot? With half a billion dollars of taxpayer money going to an organization that is riddled with scandal and corruption, not to mention death and destruction—that is a sweet spot?

If documented criminal activity of dismembering children and selling their organs for profit is not horrific enough to lose eligibility for public funding forever, America will never heal from the scourge of abortion, the blood of our preborn brothers and sisters ever staining our hearts and souls.

President-elect Trump's nomination of Congressman Tom Price, M.D.,

(R-Georgia) as Secretary of Health and Human Services demonstrates Mr. Trump's resolve to dismantle ObamaCare and to enact Pro-Life policies. Dr. Price has achieved high rankings as a Pro-Life lawmaker, a freedom-fighter, and a man whose values are manifest in his public policy positions.

Both President-elect Trump and Dr. Price face an uphill battle in advancing Pro-Life policies, but the country is aching for unwavering advocacy and would galvanize quickly behind true moral courage absent from Washington, D.C. Together, the two can lead effectively on defunding the abortion industry and Planned Parenthood by changing eligibility rules.

President-elect Trump must champion protecting preborn children who feel the torturous pain of abortion at five months of development. Another winning issue is to stop the barbaric

procedure of dismembering live, preborn children—a measure that would dramatically curtail, if not end, Planned Parenthood's harvesting and trafficking of baby body parts. President-elect Trump has indicated that he is willing to protect preborn children, including through his appointees to the Supreme Court of the United States.

Even if President-elect Trump is ambivalent at worst (and I give him more credit than neutrality), this is the first window open in many years through which Pro-Life policies can be driven. *This is the sweet spot* for Pro-Lifers and for conservatives, and President-elect Trump and his team have already laid the groundwork to make America great again by returning us to a country that values and protects Life—born and preborn.

■ by Elizabeth Graham

# Texas Implements Rule to Respect Abortion Victims

Texas' Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) finalized department rules giving dignity to deceased preborn children on Monday, November 28. The new rule requires medical or abortion facilities to bury or cremate the bodies of aborted or miscarried preborn children and were slated to take effect on December 19. A judge temporarily blocked the measure in order to hear the abortion industry's case in early January. The policy has been months in the making and the center of a contentious debate, which included two public hearings and more than 35,000 public comments. In the final version, HHSC clarified that only medical facilities are subject to these rules, not Texas women suffering miscarriages at home, a clarification that Texas Right to Life asked HHSC to make.

HHSC proposed these rules originally under Governor Greg Abbott's urging, who stated that these children should not be "treated like medical waste and disposed of in landfills," as was previously standard practice for abortion facilities. Texas Right to Life echoes the Governor's sentiments; applauds HHSC for adopting administrative rules that treat these children with the same dignity afforded any other human being; and believes that the Texas Legislature should pursue additional Pro-Life victories by passing measures that will actively save lives.

The abortion lobby loudly opposed the change and voiced deceitful objections, stating, among other things, that these rules would be burdensome to women, although they actually only apply to medical facilities; that expensive funerals would be required for each child, yet nowhere in the rules is this stated; and that death certificates would be issued after each abortion or miscarriage. While HHSC explicitly clarified that the regulations do not require death certificates, the longstanding rule by the Department of

State Health Services requiring fetal death certificates to be issued for children 20 weeks and older remains in place and has seemingly not bankrupted the healthcare or abortion industries. Among the most logically incoherent objections voiced by some of the opponents was the "my body, my choice" argument. This is truly an absurd conclusion considering that the rules specifically apply to the bodies of deceased children, require nothing of their mothers, and will be carried out by medical or abortion facilities, not the women suffering miscarriages or undergoing abortions.

Some legislators may seek to codify these department rules into state law during the upcoming legislative session. However, Texas Right to Life has strongly urged elected officials to prioritize bills that will actually stop the unnecessary deaths caused by elective abortion. We support policies that provide dignity to preborn children before they are victimized and the ultimate way to accomplish this goal is to enact laws that challenge *Roe v. Wade*. With limited time and political will, Pro-Life efforts must not be focused on how babies are discarded after they are aborted. Rather, the Pro-Life movement should prioritize bills that affirm preborn children's constitutional Right to Life and will immediately save lives, like the Dismemberment Abortion Ban.

The 85th Session of the Texas Legislature begins on January 10. Texas Right to Life will be in the Capitol every day working to pass strong protections for preborn children. Texas lawmakers must fulfill their promises from the campaign trail by securing protections for the most vulnerable among us. Join us in holding our elected officials accountable and tell them you expect them to take Pro-Life action when they return to Austin.

## New Fellowship Eligibility Requirement: Tell Your Friends!

We are happy to announce a change to our eligibility requirements for the Dr. Joseph Graham Fellowship! Instead of requiring that students have at least three years remaining in their undergraduate studies, we will now allow students with at least TWO years remaining to apply. In the past, we have found that some of the most

committed and passionate members in the college Pro-Life groups with whom we work are college sophomores, and now we can invite them to apply for the Fellowship. We are confident the Fellowship will become even stronger, more competitive, and develop an even higher retention rate because of this change.

Please share this information with any current college sophomore and encourage him or her to apply for our Fellowship. Interested students can visit [TexasRightToLife.com/StudentCentral](https://TexasRightToLife.com/StudentCentral).

# San Antonio Celebration of Life energized the masses



Sandra and Gerald R. were happy to make time amidst hectic holiday schedules to celebrate Life with other passionate Pro-Lifers in San Antonio.



Todd and Susan D. have passed their Pro-Life convictions on to their children. Eva (left) and Inga (right) pictured here joined their parents at the San Antonio Celebration of Life.



Eager to spread the Pro-Life message of Texas Right to Life to others, Walt and Janie S. brought their friends Debbie M. and Bryan A. to experience an unforgettable evening at the Inaugural San Antonio Celebration of Life.



Dr. Paul Wilke, D.D.S., and Mrs. Connie Wilke have been involved with Texas Right to Life for many years. Paul and Connie were thrilled to help launch the Inaugural San Antonio Celebration of Life.

Development Director Elizabeth McClung and sponsor John H. enjoyed meeting many new supporters who want to work to end the injustices of abortion and euthanasia.



As these young, courageous leaders work fearlessly to build a Culture of Life on their college campuses, they were moved and inspired by the firsthand account of Sandra Merritt's undercover work inside the abortion giant, Planned Parenthood. From left to right: Paige Kubenka, University of Texas – Austin; Alicia Torres, University of Texas – Austin; Matthew Keller, St. Mary's University; Sandra Merritt; Sean Gillen, University of Texas – San Antonio; Luke Ayers, Trinity University; Naomi Wick, Texas State University; and Kelsey Hall, St. Mary's University.

# Students Remember Lives Lost from “Safe and Legal” Abortion

In late October, the Pro-Life Aggies, Mustangs for Life at SMU, and Pro-Life Saints at Our Lady of the Lake University held prayer vigils to remember not only the babies, but also the women who have died as a result of “safe and legal” abortion in the United States.

Members of the three groups gathered together on their respective campuses and read the names of each woman who has died from a botched abortion since the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. Because this time of prayer was rejuvenating, the groups plan to continue the event for years to come.



The Pro-Life Aggies held their prayer vigil at night so participants could light candles in remembrance of all the lives lost. Mustangs for Life at Southern Methodist University met at dusk in front of the university’s Dallas Hall for their prayer service.

## Memorials and Honorary Gifts

**In Memory/In Honor of**

Eileen Hubbard  
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Travis & Emily M.  
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In Honor of  
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### Texas Right to Life Educational Trust Fund Memorial and Honor Tribute

Please mail your contribution and this completed form to us.  
Texas Right to Life  
9800 Centre Parkway, Suite 200  
Houston, TX 77036

Enclosed is our gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

*Thank you for your gift.*

100% of your gift goes into our scholarship fund to educate and equip the next generation of Pro-Life leaders. No part of your donation will be used for fundraising, overhead costs, or salaries.

Because of your generosity, new Pro-Life heroes are being trained on college campuses daily. Thank you.

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