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Press Release:

Senator Joni Albrecht Unveils Major Pro-Life Legislation

*Recording of the press conference can be found [here](#)
Press conference media packet can be found [here](#)*

Lincoln – Joined by numerous state senators, medical professionals, and pro-life advocates at the Nebraska State Capitol, Senator Joni Albrecht unveiled major pro-life legislation that she will be introducing in the Nebraska Unicameral in the coming days.

Albrecht announced both the Nebraska Heartbeat Act and the Nebraska Pregnancy Help Act. The Nebraska Heartbeat Act will protect the lives of preborn babies with beating hearts from abortion.

“Every parent remembers hearing their child’s heartbeat for the first time,” said Albrecht. “A heartbeat is a universal sign of life, and we know that abortion stops a beating heart.”

Dr. Katrina Furth, a developmental biologist with the Charlotte Lozier Institute, supported the science underlying Albrecht’s legislation.

“The humanity of the six-week gestation fetus is undeniable from the science. Starting in the sixth week of gestation, the heart starts beating,” said Furth. “Peer-reviewed science call this a heartbeat, embryology textbooks call this a heartbeat, and the people of Nebraska call this a heartbeat. This heartbeat will not stop until that person dies.”

The legislation requires physicians to perform an ultrasound to listen for a fetal heartbeat. If a heartbeat is detected, the legislation would prohibit the physician from aborting a living preborn baby. The legislation allows abortions in cases of rape, incest, and to save the life of the mother. The legislation also clearly provides that treatment for ectopic pregnancy and care after miscarriage remain unaffected, and does not affect access to in vitro fertilization.

The legislation does not impose criminal or civil penalties for physicians who perform abortions. Instead, a physician’s medical license could be subject to discipline if they are found to have violated the Heartbeat Act, as can occur with other instances of serious unprofessional conduct.

“When I provide care for a pregnant woman, I am responsible for two patients: the mother and her unborn child,” said Dr. Robert Plambeck, a Nebraska physician practicing obstetrics and gynecology. “There is nothing in this bill that prevents me or any doctor from providing appropriate and necessary medical care to a pregnant woman or from terminating a pregnancy in the rare and tragic instance when the mother’s life is at stake.” Albrecht added that “Doctors will have no reason to think twice about providing medical care to women who need it.”

Statewide polling supporting the Heartbeat Act was also introduced by Albrecht. The polling demonstrates that 58% of Nebraska voters, which includes nearly two-thirds of Independents and nearly half of Democrats, support a law that would protect unborn children from the moment their heartbeat can be detected.

Albrecht was also joined by Toni Clarke, Executive Director of Assure Woman's Center, a pregnancy help organization based in Omaha, to discuss the Nebraska Pregnancy Help Act. The Pregnancy Help Act would support and empower women and families in Nebraska by incentivizing donations to pregnancy help organizations in Nebraska through the creation of a tax credit. The legislation would authorize up to \$10 million in tax credits, which would support the work of pregnancy help organizations as they serve pregnant and parenting women in need, including food, housing, transportation, baby supplies, and job training.

"We are with her when she hears her child's heartbeat for the very first time," said Clarke. "Every parent remembers the emotion of hearing a heartbeat. And for a young woman all alone that heartbeat can be very frightening, that emotion is magnified. Pregnancy help organization staff and volunteers walk with her through the flood of emotions. With twenty-five pregnancy help organizations from every corner of the great state of Nebraska, we provide free services to help women at every stage."

When asked whether she was hopeful this legislation could pass through the Nebraska Unicameral, Albrecht responded that she is confident there is the support to pass this legislation.

"The state of Nebraska is best served when every life counts, when every life, born and unborn, is valued and cherished, said Albrecht. "Let's start here, in a place where we should all be able to agree: women deserve support, and babies with a beating heart should be protected."

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