

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.** August 10, 2022. Ft Morgan, CO. Sponsors of Initiative #56 “Equal Protection of Every Living Child” attended an appointment at the Secretary of State’s office on Monday afternoon where they reported to staff they did not meet the required number of signatures designated by the Secretary of State to undergo processing, and therefore, would not be turning in petitions. The sponsors did not release the number of signatures collected but said they were encouraged to see the momentum building prior to the August 8<sup>th</sup> deadline.

“The real tragedy here are the children who will lose their lives and the women who won’t be protected,” said the spokeswoman for the group, Faye Barnhart. After a challenge by a pro-abortion group, resulting in a rehearing before the Title Board, the Colorado Life Initiative had only three months to gather signatures, rather than the full allotted six months. “We ran the initiative anyway,” Barnhart stated, “we had to do everything we could to bring to Colorado voters the seriousness of what elective abortion does to take the lives of precious children and the harm it causes their mothers. We were amazed how quickly news spread on a grassroots level. We had more than 400 circulators join in the efforts.”

The initiative would have protected women from the harms of abortion and saved the lives of more than 24,000 children before the next election cycle by closing abortion facilities, preventing the mailing of abortion pills, and directing doctors to save lives rather than intentionally take lives. As they circulated petitions, the group educated Coloradans on the development of children, including children’s hearts beating by 21 days, visible faces and arms and legs by 5 weeks, detectable brain waves by 6 weeks, and observable reactions to pain by 7 weeks. “Precious, innocent children who look like they will look when they are born – just smaller - depend on all of us to protect them from painful death,” the spokeswoman said.

Colorado was the first state to legalize abortion in 1967. Current Colorado law allows dismemberment and poisoning of children up to 40 weeks and birth without any regulations or restrictions. In late term abortions, the mother is put into labor to deliver her stillborn child which is more dangerous than live childbirth and more dangerous than a c-section that would save both lives. Early in pregnancy, pills used to cause early miscarriage put a mother into preterm labor to deliver her child herself, accompanied by intense pain and bleeding that can result in hemorrhage, infection, and in some cases, death. Both pro-abortionists and pro-life advocates agree on the bodily autonomy of women; where the groups disagree is if the child also possesses bodily autonomy and if abortion is a human rights violation.

“When this passes,” Faye continues, “women will be referred to the more than two hundred no-cost pregnancy help centers, modern adoption organizations, non-profits, and churches across the state helping women with individual challenges such as finances and abuse to find hope, rather than a one-size-fits-all abortion that doesn’t help her at all with her circumstances and only further harms her and exploits her by those profiting off killing children. Intentionally taking the lives of children is never necessary. Even if not successful, doctors can always attempt to save lives. Abortion harms women and does not do a woman any favors by following up sexual assault with another assault on her body and violating the body of her child. Forced miscarriage by putting women into preterm labor or painfully stretching her to rip her child from her piece by piece or by poison doesn’t help anyone. The anxiety, depression, and rage that more than 55% of women suffer following an abortion shows this is wrong for women, men, and our communities. Women deserve better than abortion. Children deserve to live their one and only life to the fullest extent possible.”

The measure would have made it “illegal to murder a child at any time prior to, during, or after birth regardless of age or level of development”. The group says it is encouraged to keep going and present a measure again that would protect every living child equally. The group’s website, “gotaheart.org” shows the development of a child from the moment of life through birth, has a video library, letters to pastors and priests, Scriptures, links to other websites to help women experiencing overwhelming challenges while pregnant or who need healing from the trauma of a past abortion, and answers to arguments they’ve heard from opponents.

“We pray everyone who cares about the welfare of children and the best interests of women will join us in helping Colorado use our most recent understanding of human development and abortion procedures to stop this gruesome and cruel act of ending the lives of children,” Barnhart stated. “Every woman deserves protection and every child deserves a birthday.”

The group plans to continue to speak and educate across the state and do the prep work to get the measure onto the ballot again in 2024.

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