



## President Bush Scores Major Victories for Pro-Life Cause

By Christopher Maska, Esq., President

The life of the innocent unborn recently received special protection under federal law. President George W. Bush signed into law two new major pieces of pro-life legislation that protects the unborn at all stages of development. Because of his pro-life leadership, this year is one of the most successful ever for the pro-life cause.

### Unborn Victims of Violence Act

On April 1, 2004, President Bush signed into law the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, also known as "Laci and Conner's Law." The murder of Laci Peterson and her unborn son, Conner, sparked a national debate on protecting unborn babies who are victims of violent crimes.

The Unborn Victims of Violence Act now makes it a federal crime to harm an unborn child during an assault on a pregnant woman. At the bill-signing ceremony, President Bush noted, *"the law of our nation will acknowledge the plain fact that crimes of violence against a pregnant woman often have two victims... All who knew Laci Peterson have mourned two deaths, and the law cannot look away and pretend there was just one."*

President Bush and pro-life advocates champion this law as a major step toward recognizing the personhood of unborn children the same as children who are born (with the exception of abortion as required by the U.S. Supreme Court). The

federal law now mirrors the new Texas state law, the Prenatal Protection Act. (See *State legislation*, p. 6.)

### Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act

Landmark pro-life legislation was also marked by the passage of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. Widely seen as a major defeat for pro-abortion advocates, the partial-birth abortion ban prohibits third trimester abortions in which most of the baby is almost completely delivered down the birth canal before a doctor destroys the child's skull and brain.

According to a USA Today-CNN-Gallup poll, 70% of Americans support the ban on partial-birth abortions. However, abortion rights advocates have challenged the new law in court. Upon signing the bill into law, President Bush vowed to "vigorously defend this law against any who would try to challenge it in the courts."

### Support Our Leaders

Texas Alliance for Life salutes President Bush and pro-life elected officials who are willing to fight to uphold the landmark legislation that gives new rights to the unborn. We must protect our newly gained victories.

*Austin attorney Christopher Maska is president of Texas Alliance for Life.*



*President George W. Bush signs the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, April 1, 2004. Pictured are (from left) Sen. Orrin Hatch, Rep. Melissa Hart, Sen. Mike DeWine, Carol Lyons, Buford Lyons, Laci Peterson's mother Sharon Rocha, her stepfather Ron Grantski, Tracy Marciniak-Seavers, Cynthia Warner, and Stephanie Alberts.*

by Joe Pojman, Ph.D., Exec. Dir.

The strength of the pro-life movement has been our broad coalition of diverse people from many backgrounds and faiths. What binds us together, despite our differences, is our commitment to protecting the unprotected in our society.

The good news is that, at this key time in our country, the hearts and minds of our fellow citizens are increasingly moving in our direction.

A solid majority of the population does not agree with abortion on demand, and this cuts across all demographics, including Republicans, yes, but also many Democrats. We are of many faiths: Catholic, Orthodox, many Protestants, including Baptists, Lutherans, Assemblies of God, Pentecostal, nondenominational Christians, and many others. Agnostics and atheists have joined our ranks.

Now is the time to increase our base of supporters to our fellow Americans not traditionally identified as part of our movement but who hold our values. If we truly want to protect unborn babies and their mothers (and we do!), we have no other option.

We must continue to reach out. For example, we are just beginning to make inroads with Americans of the Jewish, Islam and Mormon faiths who are pro-life and pro-family.

We must continue to reach out to those people of good will who believe, as we do, in using peaceful and legal means to protect society's most vulnerable and innocent members. To do less would be to allow people to die unnecessarily. We don't have that luxury.

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**TEXAS ALLIANCE FOR LIFE** would like to introduce our staff and our summer interns who, along with our board of directors and many volunteers, work tirelessly to keep the organization growing and running smoothly.

### Meet Our Staff



Joe Pojman, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



Mary Shearer  
Director of  
Administration



Jill Davis  
Special Assistant  
to Exec. Director



Jayme Bennett  
Director of  
Volunteer Dev.



Christine DeLoma  
Director of  
Communications



Patty Fennessey  
Events Director

### Meet Our Summer Interns



Christa Carlton  
Blackstone Fellow,  
University of Texas  
School of Law



Delia Van Loenen  
Blackstone Fellow,  
University of Maine  
School of Law



Amy Potemski  
George Washington  
University School  
of Public Affairs

## Advancements in Ultrasound Technology

Strikingly clear images of unborn babies smiling, yawning, and kicking in the womb became available through the newest advancement in ultrasound technology. It was discovered



at 12 weeks that unborn babies can stretch, kick, and leap around the womb — well before the mother can feel movement. The new 3D profile is characterized by its depth and clarity, compared to the conventional two-dimensional profile that has been widely used since the 1980s. This new technology shows the humanity of the unborn baby at its earliest stages — exposing the pro-abortion myth that the unborn child is just a “blob of tissue.” General Electric manufactures the new technology, and information is available at their website at [www.gehealthcare.com/rad/us/4d](http://www.gehealthcare.com/rad/us/4d).

# Texas Rally for Life WRAP-UP

On January 24, 2004, TAL held its annual Texas Rally for Life, a peaceful pro-life march and rally, at the state capitol in Austin. The Rally commemorated the 31st anniversary of the tragic *Roe v. Wade* U.S. Supreme Court decision. The rally also recognized



More than 1,000 Texans came from across the state.

recent pro-life successes, nationally and in Texas. **Most Rev. Gregory Aymond**, Bishop of the Austin Diocese introduced keynote speaker **Most Rev. John Yanta**, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Amarillo, where local pro-life citizens helped to close several Planned Parenthood facilities. Other participants included **Tina Benkiser**, chairman of the Republican Party of

Texas; **Dr. Lois Kerschen**, past president of Democrats for Life of America; and **Molly White**, Texas Leader of Operation Outcry: Silent No More, an organization of women who have been victims of abortion, and **Chris Danze** of Texas Contractors and Suppliers for Life.

More than 1,000 people attended the rally.



Bishop John Yanta

*Help us  
mobilize your community for  
peaceful civic action.*

Contact us at 512-477-1244 or  
[info@texasallianceforlife.org](mailto:info@texasallianceforlife.org)  
or visit [www.texasallianceforlife.org](http://www.texasallianceforlife.org).

Join us for next year's

**January 22, 2005**

1:00 PM Republic Square  
Austin, TX

March on Congress Ave.  
to the State Capitol.

Together, let's celebrate  
victory for life!



Bishop Gregory Aymond

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Thanks to all who helped make the *Walk for Life 2004* one of our most successful ever — walkers, sponsors, church pastors and clergy, church contacts, site organizers, and other TAL volunteers. The *Walk* raised more than \$85,000 in pledges!

Because of this essential fund-raising event, Texas Alliance for Life can work toward the passage of protective pro-life laws and can defend those laws when challenged in court. We can continue to promote fundamental pro-life education about the sanctity of innocent human life, and we are able to give grants to pro-life agencies that assist pregnant women.

100% of the proceeds from the *Walk for Life* will support efforts throughout Texas to protect mothers and their unborn children and to promote respect for innocent human life.

80% will help Texas Alliance for Life Trust Fund, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, to change hearts and save lives by educating the public and by defending pro-life public policies in the courts.

20% will help mothers in Texas *choose life* through grants to agencies that provide compassionate assistance to mothers and their unborn babies. Over the years, we have given over \$40,000 from our *Walks* to Texas agencies that support women in crisis pregnancies.

This year we are proud to award more than \$8,000 in grants to these eight agencies:

- LifeCare Pregnancy Center in Austin.
- Lifeline in Austin
- Hope Pregnancy Centers in Temple, Killeen, and Copperas Cove
- Pregnancy Help Center of Williamson County
- Breath of Life Maternity Support Ministries in Austin
- Taylor Pregnancy Resource Center
- Seguin Pregnancy Center
- Agape Pregnancy Resource Center in Round Rock



*Sister Guadalupe Medina and walkers from Cristo Rey Catholic Church.*



## TOP WALKERS

### Life Level (\$5,000+)

John O'Sullivan \$8,357  
Msgr. Edward Jordan \$5,032  
Joe & Marilyn Williams \$5,235

### Joy Level (\$2,000+)

Jan Galbraith \$3,695  
Msgr. Joseph Deane \$2,971  
Larry & Shirley Reeder \$2,155  
Maxine Shannahan \$2,055  
Keith Sterzing \$2,725

### Hope Level (\$1,000+)

Shawn Walsh \$1,746  
Msgr. Oliver Johnson \$1,525  
Deacon Ka-Leung Lee \$1,357  
Brenda Swinney \$1,335  
Rev. Don Sawyer \$1,330  
Therese Gretencord \$1,215  
Joe Pojman \$1,180  
Holly Hansen \$1,137  
Rev. Cletus Udoh \$1,087

### Growth Level (\$500+)

Deacon John Pickwell \$975  
Erin Butler \$875  
Rev. Le-Minh Pham \$845  
Rev. David Williams \$751  
Joseph Thornton \$725  
Anthony Brocato \$695

Linda Johnston \$670  
The Honorable Tim Von Dohlen \$655  
Rev. Danny Garcia \$632  
Muriel Bodin \$609  
Rebecca Lee \$605  
Carolyn Bennett \$595  
Ed & Jean Cullen \$590  
Robert O'Donnell \$550  
Lansing & Linda Prescott \$525  
Alberto Borruel \$522  
Vivian Badillo \$520  
Mark Molchen \$515  
Elliot Lee \$505  
Deacon Allen Desorcie \$502  
Samuel Higgins \$500  
Michelle Young \$500

## SPONSORS

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Starbucks, Jack and Cynthia Selman,  
Tony the Magician, Majella Society,  
Ron Butler Building LLP  
Knights of Columbus:  
St. Ignatius Council 10131  
St. Louis Council 5967  
St. Paul Council 10209  
Santa Cruz Council 9038  
St. Theresa's Council 9796  
St. John Neuman Council 10836

(Visit [www.texasallianceforlife.org](http://www.texasallianceforlife.org) for a complete list.)

### Lone Star Sponsor \$2,500

Terry and Shannon McDaniel  
Jack and Cynthia Selman  
Rev. Msgr. Edward Jordan  
John & Margaret O'Sullivan

### Red Sponsor \$1,000

The Honorable Tim Von Dohlen  
Michael & Linda McCaul

### White Sponsor \$500

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Columbus Council 10836  
St. Paul's Knights of Columbus  
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St. Louis Knights of Columbus  
Council 5967  
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Salt & Light Comm.

Ed & Jean Cullen

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Judge Christopher Maska

Kirk Overbey  
Ron Butler Builder, LLP  
Dr. Joe & Beatriz Pojman  
Austin-Catholics

Rod & Jan Madden  
Donna & Bill Crocker, Esq.  
Kress & Associates  
Judge John Devine  
Cashway Building Materials

# Life Matters

is the newsletter of Texas Alliance for Life, Inc., and the Texas Alliance for Life Trust Fund. We are a nonpartisan, nonsectarian organization of people committed to protecting innocent human life from conception to natural death. We condone only legal, peaceful activities.

2026 Guadalupe Street  
Austin, TX 78705  
Phone: 512.477.1244  
Fax: 512.472.6246  
[info@texasallianceforlife.org](mailto:info@texasallianceforlife.org)  
[www.texasallianceforlife.org](http://www.texasallianceforlife.org)

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Pro-lifers have worked very hard for state legislative victories for over twenty years and have met with success in recent years. We now have several pro-life laws written into state law. But how well are those state laws working in terms of protecting innocent human lives and promoting a culture of life?

This article examines four pro-life measures passed since 1999 and looks to the next state legislative session in Austin beginning in January 2005, after the fall elections.

Though the laws have plenty of room for improvement, the preliminary results show that the legislative efforts have brought about remarkable successes with promises of more to come.

In 1999, when then-Governor George W. Bush signed the Texas Parental Notification Act into law, pro-lifers predicted a drop in births, pregnancies, and abortions for minor girls.

The law went into effect on January 1, 2000, and the results for the first three years of operation show just that.

According to latest available Texas Department of

Health figures, for Texas girls 17 years of age and younger, all three indicators have declined significantly each year after 1999, despite a 10.9% increase in the population of at-risk girls. By 2002, births dropped by 7.3% (1,549), pregnancies declined 10.7% (2,806), and abortions fell 26.2% (1,236) compared to 1999, the year before the law went into effect. "We are thrilled at the dramatic drop in abortions for young Texas girls," said Joe

Pojman, Ph.D., TAL's executive director.

Nevertheless, more work needs to be done. First, if notification works well, a new law requiring abortion providers to obtain the consent of parents before performing abortions on their minor daughters might work better. "Our goal is to remove the barriers that the pro-abortion majority of the U.S. Supreme Court has placed between parents and their young daughters," said Pojman.

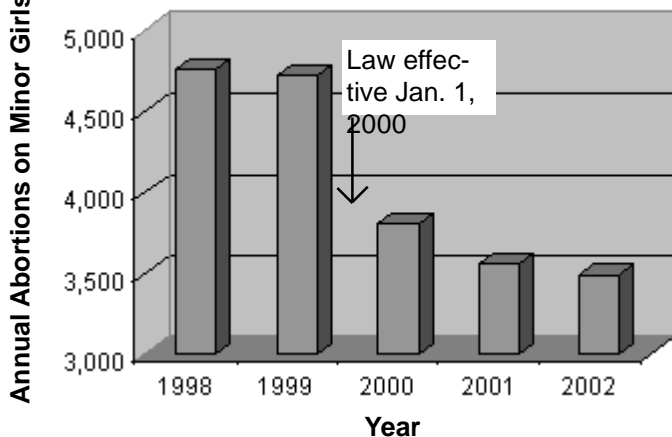
Second, loopholes in the judicial bypass have raised red flags. Abortion providers seem to be abusing the judicial bypass exception to help minors routinely obtain abortions without parental involvement by taking young pregnant girls hundreds of miles away from home to avoid judges in Harris and Dallas Counties who strictly abide by the law. According to Peter Durkin, director of Planned Parenthood of Houston, "Court shopping makes sense," as quoted in the *Houston Chronicle*.

## #2: PRENATAL PROTECTION

Considered one of the major successes of the pro-life movement in Texas, the Prenatal Protection Act, passed in 2003, recognizes the personhood of unborn children in the

*See Results on Page 7*

**Effect of Texas Parental Notification Law**



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### Results of State Laws, from p. 6

Texas Penal Code, thereby protecting them from crimes such as murder, assault, drunk driving, and criminal negligence. The law now defines a person as “a human being who is alive, including an unborn child at every stage of gestation from fertilization until birth.” This remarkable achievement was six years in the making and was one of Texas Alliance for Life’s top priority.

“We believe that Texas law now better protects unborn children and their mothers from harm and sends the message that the state of Texas regards unborn children as persons,” said Pojman.

Since going into effect on September 1, 2003, criminals in several counties have been prosecuted for harming unborn babies. Hopefully, this will deter others. Also, press accounts are educating the public that Texas recognizes unborn children as babies. “Lufkin teenager charged in deaths of unborn twins,” read a recent *Austin American-Statesman* article about an 18-year-old man who beat his pregnant girlfriend until she lost the babies. The man faces charges of first degree murder.

### #3: WOMEN’S RIGHT TO KNOW

Since 1997, State Representative Frank Corte (R-San Antonio) has worked to pass a law to give women enough information about abortion and alternatives so they will not be pressured into a unwanted abortions. In 2003, he was successful. The Women’s Right to Know Act requires abortion providers to make available state-produced brochures describing the risks of abortion, the characteristics of unborn children, and a comprehensive list of agencies that provide compassionate alternatives.

The Texas Department of Health produced very good informational brochures. While many abortion doctors are failing to give the information to women as intended by the Legislature, we know of cases in which women decided against abor-

tion because of the law.

### #4: TAX SUBSIDIZED ABORTIONS

In 2003, the Legislature passed a provision called Rider 8 to prohibit millions of tax dollars in “family planning” funds from going to abortion providers. This would ensure that abortion providers do not use tax dollars to subsidize their abortion businesses.

Planned Parenthood, Texas’ largest abortion provider, sued to strike down the provision. The case is before the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. Depending on how the court rules, Planned Parenthood stands to lose \$13 to \$18 million in tax-funded grants. Planned Parenthood argued in court that the policy would limit their ability to provide abortions. Abortions would likely decrease, and lives would likely be saved.

Texas Alliance for Life (with the Liberty Legal Institute) has filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the Fifth Circuit to clarify that Texas Rider 8 policy is indeed constitutional. The court could decide at any time.



*The Prenatal Protection Act means Texas law now recognizes and protects the personhood of unborn children beginning at fertilization, including this 20-week-old baby.*

### New Non-Profit Airls Pro-Life Commercials

Over 600 pro-life educational commercials aired on Austin TV networks this summer. Sponsored by the newly-formed Majella Society, the TV spots are professionally researched and developed, targeting women ages 18–49.

The mission of the Majella Society is to promote respect and love of life through positive mass media education. Other states have significantly decreased abortions after running campaigns similar to the Majella Society’s commercials.

For more information on the Majella Society and their ongoing pro-life efforts, please contact Tanya Tarsha at (512) 452-5568.



*This fire fighter promotes a pro-life message in a new TV ad sponsored by the Majella Society.*

August 2004

## Texas Alliance for Life

PO Box 49137

Austin, TX 78765

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# Life Matters

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# VICTORIES TO BE WON!

## TEXAS ALLIANCE FOR LIFE ANNUAL BANQUET

GUEST SPEAKERS:

ATTORNEY GENERAL GREG ABBOTT  
JANET FOLGER, PRESIDENT & FOUNDER, FAITH2ACTION

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2004  
AUSTIN MARRIOTT AT THE CAPITOL  
701 E. 11TH STREET (11TH AND NORTH IH 35)

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM SILENT AUCTION  
6:15 PM – 7:00 PM VIP RECEPTION  
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM LIVE AUCTION AND DINNER

