



"This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live..." Deuteronomy 30:19

Rev. Ceasar I. LeFlore III – Midwest Director
(708) 849-1630 – (708) 378-4712

President of the Senate Senator John J. Cullerton
327 Capitol Building
Springfield, IL 62706
john@senatorcullerton.com

Speaker of the House Representative Michael J. Madigan
300 Capitol Building
Springfield, IL 62706
mmadigan@hds.ilga.gov

House Republican Leader Representative Tom Cross
316 Capitol Building
Springfield, IL 62706
tom@tomcross.com

July 26, 2012

Dear Leaders of the Illinois General Assembly,

A tragedy occurred in Illinois last week. A young woman died as a result of an abortion. The ongoing tragedy is that this state's lack of even the most basic health regulation of abortion providers and clinics are setting the stage for it to happen again.

First, the pro-life community of Illinois extends prayers and sympathy to the family of Miss Tonya Reaves, who died on Friday, July 20, of complications following an abortion at Planned Parenthood's Loop Health Center in Chicago.

Secondly, this is a clarion call for increased abortion clinic regulation, and it is here issued to you, the leaders of the Illinois General Assembly by representatives of the Illinois pro-life community.

The premature deaths of this young mother and her child occurred in an abortion facility that is not regulated by the State of Illinois. Illinois law does not require Planned Parenthood's clinics to be inspected by the state's Department of Public Health. This lack of oversight is unconscionable.

This young woman's avoidable death, and the abortion of her preborn baby, occurred following a second trimester abortion performed at Planned Parenthood's Loop Health Center. The abortion center's website lists that it offers the abortion pill (medication abortion) and states that "in-clinic abortions from 6 weeks to 17 weeks and 6 days are available at our Near North (1200 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago) and Aurora (3051 E. New York Street, Aurora) health centers."

Because we value the life of both Tonya Reaves and her unborn child, we call on the State of Illinois to pass legislation to regulate the procedures performed in Planned Parenthood's facilities.

Planned Parenthood's Loop Health Center is clearly not equipped to provide a second trimester abortion or to respond to an emergency situation such as the one that resulted in the tragic death of an otherwise healthy young woman. A woman who goes to an abortion provider naturally assumes that she is going to a medically approved facility and not to a company that is operating an unlicensed, uninspected, and unregulated surgery.

The Illinois General Assembly must take seriously the health and safety of the women of Illinois. While we in the pro-life community diligently work toward the day that the lives of the unborn are protected in law, we urge the legislature to immediately enact laws and policies that insure the protection of women. In the last legislative session, the Illinois legislature failed to call for a vote on H.B. 4117 which would have required all abortion clinics to meet the same health and safety standards as all other ambulatory surgical treatment centers—including those run by Planned Parenthood.

Illinois needs to join the twenty other states that mandate counseling for women who are scheduled to undergo an abortion. Often referred to as "Informed Consent" laws or "Women's Right to Know" laws, these measures require the physician to inform the pregnant woman of the many risks involved in an abortion. Illinois should become the twenty-seventh state to require at least a 24-hour waiting period between receiving counseling for the abortion and completing the procedure.

As the Midwest Director of L.E.A.R.N. (Life Education and Resource Network), the nation's largest black pro-life organization, I am joined by Aid for Women of Northern Lake County, Catholic Citizens of Illinois, Concerned Women for America of Illinois, Illinois Citizens for Ethics PAC, Illinois Family Institute, Illinois Review, Illinois Right to Life Committee, Lake County Right to Life, Life Advocacy Resource Project, Lutherans for Life, McHenry County Right to Life, Professional Women's Network, Pro-Life Action League, Pro-Life/Pro-Family Coalition, Students for Life of Illinois, Tradition Family and Property and Word of Hope.

We beseech you to enact laws aimed at protecting women's lives and health. Let our elected officials show their concern for all the women of Illinois, so that the tragedy of death that took Tonya Reaves and her child not be repeated.

Sincerely,



Pastor Ceasar LeFlore
Life Education and Resource Network (L.E.A.R.N.)

Joined by:

Drs. Hiram and Joronda Crawford
Pro-Life/Pro-Family Coalition

Joseph M. Scheidler
Pro-Life Action League

Bonnie Quirke
Lake County Right to Life

John-Paul Deddens
Students for Life of Illinois

David Smith
Illinois Family Institute

Colleen Nolan
Concerned Women for America of Illinois

Mary Anne Hackett
Catholic Citizens of Illinois

Nancy Morrissey
Professional Women's Network

Preston Noell
Tradition, Family and Property

Diane Schroeder
Lutherans for Life

Grace Kern
Word of Hope

Mary-Louise Hengesbaugh
Illinois Citizens for Ethics PAC

Penny Pullen
Life Advocacy Resource Project

Rosemary Hackett
Illinois Right to Life Committee

Irene Napier
McHenry County Right to Life

Carol Walsh
Aid for Women of Northern Lake County

Fran Eaton
Illinois Review

Dawn Behnke
Illinois Federation for Right to Life

Pat Conklin
Knox County Right to Life

Linda Behnken
Belleville Area Right to Life

cc:

President of the Senate Senator John J. Cullerton
1726 West Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657

Speaker of the House Representative Michael J. Madigan
6500 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60629

House Republican Leader Representative Tom Cross
24047 West Lockport Street, Suite 213, Plainfield, IL 60544

The Life Education and Resource Network
911 Bragg Blvd. Fayetteville, North Carolina 28301
(910) 868-5327
www.learninc.org