

12101357D

SENATE BILL NO. 484

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-76 of the Code of Virginia, relating to ultrasound requirement as part of informed consent for abortion.

Patrons—Vogel, Smith, Black, Carrico, Colgan, Garrett, McDougle, McWaters, Newman, Puckett, Ruff and Stanley; Delegate: Peace

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 18.2-76 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-76. Informed written consent required; civil penalty.

A. Before performing any abortion or inducing any miscarriage or terminating a pregnancy as provided in §§ 18.2-72, 18.2-73 or § 18.2-74, the physician shall obtain the informed written consent of the pregnant woman. However, if the woman has been adjudicated incapacitated by any court of competent jurisdiction or if the physician knows or has good reason to believe that such woman is incapacitated as adjudicated by a court of competent jurisdiction, then only after permission is given in writing by a parent, guardian, committee, or other person standing in loco parentis to the woman, may the physician perform the abortion or otherwise terminate the pregnancy.

B. *Except in the case of a medical emergency, at least 2 hours before the performance of an abortion a qualified medical professional trained in sonography and working under the direct supervision of a physician licensed in the Commonwealth shall perform fetal ultrasound imaging and auscultation of fetal heart tone services on the patient undergoing the abortion for the purpose of determining gestational age. The ultrasound image shall be made pursuant to standard medical practice in the community, contain the dimensions of the fetus, and accurately portray the presence of external members and internal organs of the fetus, if present or viewable. Determination of gestational age shall be based upon measurement of the fetus in a manner consistent with standard medical practice in the community in determining gestational age. When only the gestational sac is visible during ultrasound imaging, gestational age may be based upon measurement of the gestational sac. A print of the ultrasound image shall be made to document the measurements that have been taken to determine the gestational age of the fetus.*

C. *The qualified medical professional performing fetal ultrasound imaging pursuant to subsection B shall offer the woman an opportunity to view and receive a printed copy of the ultrasound image and hear auscultation of fetal heart tone and shall obtain from the woman written certification that this opportunity was offered and whether or not it was accepted. A printed copy of the ultrasound image shall be maintained in the woman's medical record at the facility where the abortion is to be performed for the longer of (i) seven years or (ii) the extent required by applicable federal or state law.*

D. For purposes of this section:

"Informed written consent" means the knowing and voluntary written consent to abortion by a pregnant woman of any age, without undue inducement or any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, or other form of constraint or coercion by the physician who is to perform the abortion or his agent. The basic information to effect such consent, as required by this subsection, shall be provided by telephone or in person to the woman at least 24 hours before the abortion by the physician who is to perform the abortion, by a referring physician, or by a licensed professional or practical nurse working under the direct supervision of either the physician who is to perform the abortion or the referring physician; however, the information in subdivision 5 may be provided instead by a licensed health-care professional working under the direct supervision of either the physician who is to perform the abortion or the referring physician. This basic information shall include:

1. A full, reasonable and comprehensible medical explanation of the nature, benefits, and risks of and alternatives to the proposed procedures or protocols to be followed in her particular case;

2. An instruction that the woman may withdraw her consent at any time prior to the performance of the procedure;

3. An offer for the woman to speak with the physician who is to perform the abortion so that he may answer any questions that the woman may have and provide further information concerning the procedures and protocols;

4. A statement of the probable gestational age of the fetus at the time the abortion is to be performed and that fetal ultrasound imaging shall be performed prior to the abortion to confirm the gestational

INTRODUCED

SB484

58 *age; and*

59 5. An offer to review the printed materials described in subsection *D F*. If the woman chooses to
60 review such materials, they shall be provided to her in a respectful and understandable manner, without
61 prejudice and intended to give the woman the opportunity to make an informed choice and shall be
62 provided to her at least 24 hours before the abortion or mailed to her at least 72 hours before the
63 abortion by first-class mail or, if the woman requests, by certified mail, restricted delivery. This offer for
64 the woman to review the material shall advise her of the following: (i) the Department of Health
65 publishes printed materials that describe the unborn child and list agencies that offer alternatives to
66 abortion; (ii) medical assistance benefits may be available for prenatal care, childbirth and neonatal care,
67 and that more detailed information on the availability of such assistance is contained in the printed
68 materials published by the Department; (iii) the father of the unborn child is liable to assist in the
69 support of her child, even in instances where he has offered to pay for the abortion, that assistance in
70 the collection of such support is available, and that more detailed information on the availability of such
71 assistance is contained in the printed materials published by the Department; and (iv) she has the right
72 to review the materials printed by the Department and that copies will be provided to her free of charge
73 if she chooses to review them. Where the woman has advised that the pregnancy is the result of a rape,
74 the information in clause (iii) ~~above~~ may be omitted.

75 The information required by this subsection may be provided by telephone ~~without conducting a~~
76 ~~physical examination of or tests upon the woman, in which case the information required to be provided~~
77 ~~may be based on facts supplied by the woman and whatever other relevant information is reasonably~~
78 ~~available to the physician. If a physical examination, tests or the availability of other information to the~~
79 ~~physician or the nurse subsequently indicates, in the medical judgment of the physician or the nurse, a~~
80 ~~revision of the information previously supplied to the woman, that revised information may be~~
81 ~~communicated to the woman at any time prior to the performance of the abortion or in person.~~

82 *CE*. The physician need not obtain the informed written consent of the woman when the abortion is
83 to be performed pursuant to a medical emergency. "Medical emergency" means any condition which, on
84 the basis of the physician's good faith clinical judgment, so complicates the medical condition of a
85 pregnant woman as to necessitate the immediate abortion of her pregnancy to avert her death or for
86 which a delay will create a serious risk of substantial and irreversible impairment of a major bodily
87 function.

88 *DF*. On or before October 1, 2001, the Department of Health shall publish, in English and in each
89 language which is the primary language of two percent or more of the population of the
90 Commonwealth, the following printed materials in such a way as to ensure that the information is easily
91 comprehensible:

92 1. Geographically indexed materials designed to inform the woman of public and private agencies
93 and services available to assist a woman through pregnancy, upon childbirth and while the child is
94 dependent, including, but not limited to, information on services relating to (i) adoption as a positive
95 alternative, (ii) information relative to counseling services, benefits, financial assistance, medical care
96 and contact persons or groups, (iii) paternity establishment and child support enforcement, (iv) child
97 development, (v) child rearing and stress management, ~~and~~ (vi) pediatric and maternal health care, *and*
98 *(vii) public and private agencies and services that provide ultrasound imaging and auscultation of fetal*
99 *heart tone services free of charge.* The materials shall include a comprehensive list of the names and
100 telephone numbers of the agencies, or, at the option of the Department of Health, printed materials
101 including a toll-free, 24-hour-a-day telephone number which may be called to obtain, orally, such a list
102 and description of agencies in the locality of the caller and of the services they offer;

103 2. Materials designed to inform the woman of the probable anatomical and physiological
104 characteristics of the human fetus at two-week gestational increments from the time when a woman can
105 be known to be pregnant to full term, including any relevant information on the possibility of the fetus's
106 survival and pictures or drawings representing the development of the human fetus at two-week
107 gestational increments. Such pictures or drawings shall contain the dimensions of the fetus and shall be
108 realistic and appropriate for the stage of pregnancy depicted. The materials shall be objective,
109 nonjudgmental and designed to convey only accurate scientific information about the human fetus at the
110 various gestational ages; and

111 3. Materials containing objective information describing the methods of abortion procedures
112 commonly employed, the medical risks commonly associated with each such procedure, the possible
113 detrimental psychological effects of abortion, and the medical risks commonly associated with carrying a
114 child to term.

115 The Department of Health shall make these materials available at each local health department and,
116 upon request, to any person or entity, in reasonable numbers and without cost to the requesting party.

117 *EG*. Any physician who fails to comply with the provisions of this section shall be subject to a
118 \$2,500 civil penalty.