

STATE AND LOCAL

House hears testimony on abortion proposal

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Lawmakers who refuse to ban abortions in the final three months of pregnancy are similar to Nazi leaders who refused to stop the killing of Jews, a Houston physician testified Monday.

But a Dallas lawyer testifying against the abortion ban said worrying about protecting fetuses is similar to worrying about protecting "seed corn."

Rockdale Rep. L.B. Kubiak's anti-abortion bill drew perhaps the largest crowd of the legislative session.

The Kubiak bill would ban abortions in the final three months of pregnancy (unless the mother's life is endangered), ban state money for abortions, require anesthesia for the fetus in some cases and require parental consent in order for a minor to get an abortion.

This problem has been virtually ignored by the state of Texas since 1973, when a Texas case sparked the U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing abortion, said Kubiak, a veterinarian.

He said the high court ruling allowed states to regulate, but not ban, abortion. Forty states have such regulations.

"With almost all other medical

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procedures, we require parental consent; why is abortion excluded?" Kubiak asked the House State Affairs Committee.

"The unborn child has less rights than a murderer on Death Row in this state," he said. "What has that child done to deserve this?"

Chairman Pete Laney, D-Hale Center, said Kubiak's bill would be sent to subcommittee.

Two of Kubiak's witnesses talked about their work in abortion clinics in Texas. Carol Everett of Dallas said she made as much as \$125,000 a year doing abortions until she decided it wasn't right.

"Nobody can tolerate killing babies day after day after day," she said. "Even the employees can't take putting them in a garbage disposal or trash can."

Judy Weerstra, former office member for an El Paso abortion

clinic, said some of the clinics have a "butcher shop image."

"It's a dog-eat-dog type of industry," she testified. "It degenerated into a facility that was profit-oriented with little concern for the health of women, much less an unborn child."

Houston physician Steven Hotze offered the Nazi Germany analogy.

"You're no different than the men and women in Germany who refused to take up the case for the Jews who were slaughtered in the abortion camps," he told the committee.

Committee member Lena Guerrero, D-Austin, told Hotze she found his testimony "offensive."

Dallas attorney Otto Mullinax offered an argument against any state restriction on abortion "until you, the state, know more about it."

"You had better let her do the guessing," he said of mothers who face an unwanted pregnancy.

Dr. Peter Weston, a San Antonio gynecologist, testified that medical science cannot determine when a fetus is "viable" and could live outside the womb. The Kubiak bill could mean that "any overzealous district attorney or grand jury could really run amok" in prosecuting physicians who perform abortions, he said.

Senate tentatively approves state presidential primary bill

Associated Press

AUSTIN — Enough Senate Democrats stayed locked-in Monday to tentatively approve a bill that would allow Texans to vote in a "Super Tuesday" presidential primary in March 1988.

The voice vote was taken after Sen. John Leedom, R-Dallas, stalled action by talking for over six hours in protest of the bill.

A final vote on another day is needed to send the bill to the House.

A motion to debate the bill cleared 24-7, with a lone Democrat — Sen.

Roy Blake of Nacogdoches — joining the six Senate Republicans in opposing the proposal.

Other Democrats strayed on later votes, but sponsor Chet Edwards, D-Duncanville kept enough on his side to beat back attempts to allow cross-over voting and cross-over filing where a candidate could seek the party nomination of Democrats and Republicans.

The vote was 17-10 against cross-over filing and 20-9 against cross-over voting.

Edwards' bill would set up a presidential primary for Democrats and Republicans on the second Tuesday of March in presidential election years. Other parties could qualify for a primary.

The date of the regular May primary for state and local candidates would not be changed.

Under Edwards' bill, 75 percent of the delegates would be named according to the popular vote in the presidential primary and 25 percent through party conventions.

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