

Parties / Candidates & Right to Life

Where do the two major political parties stand on the right to life? What are the implications of their stands?

Party leadership is responsible for developing and moving the party's agenda, or platform. Noting party affiliation when evaluating candidates' positions on an issue is not partisan, it is practical. To ignore party can produce results perverse to your desires. Party affiliation and party support or opposition can be controlling or influential regarding legislation.

Set forth below are the Democrat and Republican National parties' platform positions on the issue of the right to life and protecting the unborn from abortion. Links to the respective platform positions are provided. We note that in each case local and state platforms are essentially in line with their respective national party platform.

Certain phrases are understood and used in the

Democrat Party as inclusive of the abortion right – “family planning” and “reproductive choice,” herein. The Democrat Party parlance also does not distinguish between adult stem cell research and stem cell research involving the destruction of human embryos or cloning and killing them for research purposes. The private organization Planned Parenthood is understood by both parties as a key purveyor of abortion. In Democrat Party parlance the phrase “Pregnancy related prescriptions” is inclusive of abortifacient drugs and devices as is the term “emergency contraception.” When using the term “personal reproductive services” Democrat policy makers understand it to be inclusive of the right to abortion on demand.

Roe v Wade (along with the companion case Doe v Bolton) legalized abortion in the United States without restriction. Line or item designations to the respective platforms are provided. Note that the Republican Party at the national level is very effusive on the issue of the right to life and related matters.

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRAT PARTY The National Democrat Party (excerpts)

<http://www.democrats.org/democratic-national-platform#protecting-rights>

Protecting Rights and Freedoms

The President and the Democratic Party believe that women have a right to control their reproductive choices. Democrats support access to affordable family planning services, and President Obama and Democrats will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to de-fund Planned Parenthood health centers . . .

Protecting A Woman's Right to Choose

The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports Roe v. Wade and a woman's right to make decisions regarding her pregnancy, including a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay. We oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right. . . .

<http://www.democrats.org/democratic-national-platform#universal-values>

President Obama and the Democratic Party are committed to supporting family planning around the globe to help women care for their families, support their communities, and lead their countries to be healthier and more productive. That's why, in his first month in office, President Obama overturned the “global gag rule,” a ban on federal funds to foreign family planning organizations that provided information about, counseling on, or offered abortions. And that is why the administration has supported lifesaving family planning health information and services.

THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL PARTY
The Republican National Platform (excerpts)

<https://www.gop.com/platform/>

Faithful to the “self-evident” truths enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, we assert the sanctity of human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution and endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment’s protections apply to unborn children. We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortion or fund organizations which perform or advocate it and will not fund or subsidize health care which includes abortion coverage. We support the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life. We oppose the non-consensual withholding or withdrawal of care or treatment, including food and water, from people with disabilities, including newborns, as well as the elderly and infirm, just as we oppose active and passive euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Republican leadership has led the effort to prohibit the barbaric practice of partial-birth abortion and permitted States to extend health care coverage to children before birth. We urge Congress to strengthen the Born Alive Infant Protection Act by enacting appropriate civil and criminal penalties on healthcare providers who fail to provide treatment and care to an infant who survives an abortion, including early induction delivery where the death of the infant is intended. We call for legislation to ban sex-selective abortions – gender discrimination in its most lethal form – and to protect from abortion unborn children who are capable of feeling pain; and we applaud U.S. House Republicans for leading the effort to protect the lives of pain-capable unborn children in the District of Columbia. We call for a ban on the use of body parts from aborted fetuses for research. We support and applaud adult stem cell research to develop lifesaving therapies, and we oppose the killing of embryos for their stem cells. We oppose federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. We also salute the many States that have passed laws for informed consent, mandatory-waiting periods prior to an abortion, and health-protective clinic regulation. We seek to protect young girls from exploitation through a parental consent requirement; and we affirm our moral obligation to assist, rather than penalize, women challenged by an unplanned pregnancy. We salute those who provide them with counseling and adoption alternatives and empower them to choose life, and we take comfort in the tremendous increase in adoptions that has followed Republican legislative initiatives.

Supporting Federal Healthcare Research and Development

We call for expanded support for the stem-cell research that now offers the greatest hope for many afflictions – with adult stem cells, umbilical cord blood, and cells reprogrammed into pluripotent stem cells-without the destruction of embryonic human life. We urge a ban on human cloning and on the creation of or experimentation on human embryos. We support restoring the Drug Enforcement Administration ban on the use of controlled substances for physician-assisted suicide. We oppose the FDA approval of Mifeprex, formerly known as RU-486, and similar drugs that terminate innocent human life after conception.

Protecting Individual Conscience in Healthcare

No healthcare professional or organization should ever be required to perform, provide for, withhold, or refer for a medical service against their conscience. This is especially true of the religious organizations, which deliver a major portion of America’s healthcare, a service rooted in the charity of faith communities. We do not believe, however, that healthcare providers should be allowed to withhold services because the healthcare provider believes the patient’s life is not worth living. We support the ability of all organizations to provide, purchase, or enroll in healthcare coverage consistent with their religious, moral or ethical convictions without discrimination or penalty. We likewise support the right of parents to consent to medical treatment for their children, including mental health treatment, drug treatment, and treatment involving pregnancy, contraceptives and abortion. We urge enactment of pending legislation that would require parental consent to transport girls across state lines for abortions.