

# Dr. Patrick Johnston, D.O.

Director, Assn. of Pro-Life Physicians & Personhood Ohio

5063 Dresden Court

Zanesville, OH 43701

[www.ProLifePhysicians.org](http://www.ProLifePhysicians.org)

March 10, 2014

Sen. Chauncey Gregory  
606 Gressette Building  
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Senator Gregory,

As director of the Assn. of Pro-Life Physicians, I would like to encourage you to strongly support S.457 – the S.C. Personhood Bill – which is before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee upon which you sit. As a physician who has testified before the legislatures of Ohio, Montana, and Maryland on behalf of pro-life legislation, I strongly encourage you to guard this bill against any attempt to add exceptions and thereby weaken its moral authority and minimize its ability to protect threatened children.

It has been argued that exceptions for rape and incest are necessary to gather sufficient support for the bill. However, such an unreasonable exception defies the very scientific definition of “life” we are trying to bring to bear upon state law to protect the innocent within our lawful jurisdiction. Is a child conceived through rape any less a person, are they any less alive or less human, than those conceived under more favorable circumstances?

It has been argued that an exception for the health or life of the mother is necessary to protect physicians who perform abortions to save a woman’s life. I want to strongly guard you against adding such an exception in your Personhood bill. In Footnote 54 of *Roe v. Wade*, Blackmun pointed out that the “exception” in Texas’ law that justified abortion in such circumstances showed that even the defenders of Texas’ “pro-life” law did not believe the *fetus* was a person worthy of the protection of law and justice. This “exception” in Texas state law undermined their moral authority. Justified excuses for violating the letter of the law are issues for judges and juries to address in court; it is not necessary to put excuses into law, justifying the shedding of innocent blood if certain circumstances are met. Rather, defend the personhood of all people from the onset of their biological beginning, and if someone argues that violating this law was necessary for some reason, let it be an issue for a judge and/or a jury.

Does protecting the life of the mother ever justify intentionally killing her baby? No, not if the facts are consulted. If the mother is threatened by a pregnancy, the baby may need to be delivered prematurely, but physicians should provide the standard of care for both patients, and not intentionally act violently toward one. The medical literature says in cases such as cancer<sup>1</sup>, chorioamniotitis, and HELLP syndrome, “facilitating delivery” may be necessary to save the life of the mother, but you do not have to kill the baby to do that.



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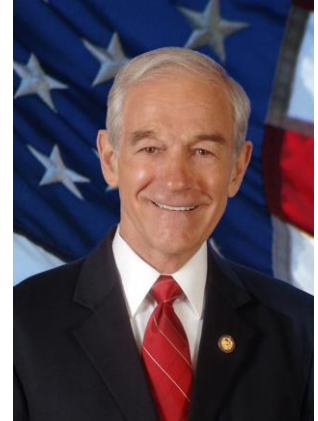
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I beg of you not to inculcate into South Carolina law any justification for intentional child-killing of any kind. You do not need to stain your hands with bloodguilt “for the greater good.” Rather, I exhort you, please strongly support this amendment and see that it remains just, based upon the scientific definition of life, without any politically motivated amendments that are not critical to the definition of life. Please be true to the premise that all human lives must be protected through law and justice.

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PO Box 1381  
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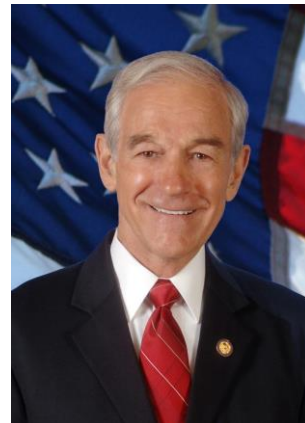
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604 Gressette Bldg.  
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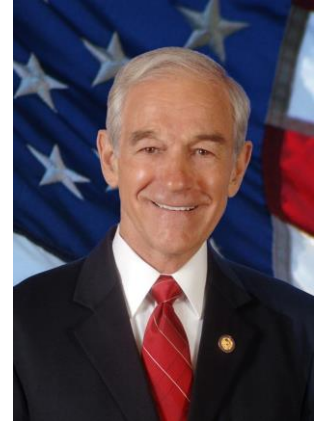
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Gary Hembree  
PO Box 944  
N. Myrtle Beach, SC 29597

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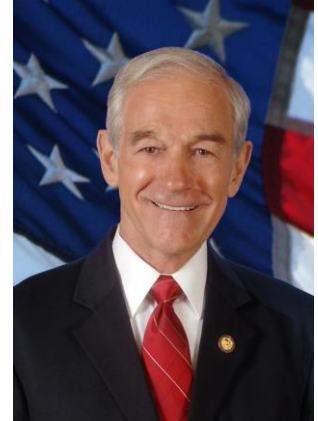
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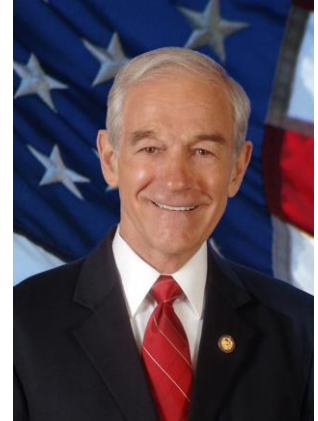
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360 Concord St., Ste. 201  
Charleston, SC 29401

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*Dr. Patrick Johnston*

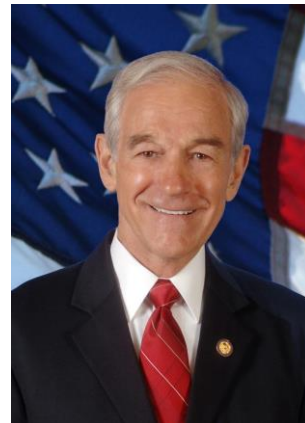
Abortion – the direct killing of the preborn child – is never necessary to save the mother’s life. This the position of the American Assn. of Pro-Life Ob/Gyns, the Christian Medical Assn., the Catholic Medical Assn., American Right to Life<sup>2</sup>, both Georgia and Colorado Right to Life, Personhood USA (for which I am a board member), and the Assn. of Pro-Life Physicians<sup>3</sup>, which I direct. It is also the position of the Dublin Declaration – a declaration of physicians in Ireland, who state, “As experienced practitioners and researchers in obstetrics and gynecology, we affirm that direct abortion – the purposeful destruction of the unborn child – is not medically necessary to save the life of the woman. We uphold that there is a fundamental difference between abortion and necessary medical treatments that are carried out to save the life of the mother, even if such treatment results in the loss of her unborn child.”



*Surgeon General Everett Coop, M.D.*

Congressman and obstetrician Ron Paul said that he never saw an abortion that was medically necessary.

Former Surgeon General Everett Coop said that abortion was “not needed to save the life of the mother. In my thirty-six years in pediatric surgery, I have never known of one instance where the child had to be aborted to save the mother’s life.”



*Congressman and obstetrician Ron Paul*

Even Planned Parenthood’s Dr. Alan Guttmacher acknowledged, “Today it is possible for almost any patient to be brought through pregnancy alive, unless she suffers from a fatal illness such as cancer or leukemia, and, if so, abortion would be unlikely to prolong, much less save, life.” (*The Case for Legalized Abortion Now*, 1967)

I beg of you not to inculcate into South Carolina law any justification for intentional child-killing of any kind. You do not need to stain your hands with bloodguilt “for the greater good.” Rather, I exhort you, please strongly support this amendment and see that it remains just, based upon the scientific definition of life, without any politically motivated amendments that are not critical to the definition of life. Please be true to the premise that all human lives must be protected through law and justice.

My cell phone is 740-973-7458. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Patrick Johnston

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1. To see a study documenting the relative safety of maternal chemotherapy for preborn children, see the peer reviewed medical article in The Lancet, [www.thelancet.com/journals/lanone/article/PIIS1470-2045\(12\)70261-9/abstract](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanone/article/PIIS1470-2045(12)70261-9/abstract).

2. “The Life of the Mother Exception” by American Right to Life, [www.americanrtl.org/life-of-the-mother-exception](http://www.americanrtl.org/life-of-the-mother-exception)

3. “Are There Rare Cases When an Abortion Is Justified?” by the Assn. of Pro-Life Physicians, [www.prolifephysicians.org/rarecases.htm](http://www.prolifephysicians.org/rarecases.htm)