

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 3, 2000

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Steny:

I am writing to express support for the Hoyer-Greenwood bill to prohibit late-term abortions. I would sign this bill if Congress were to pass it in its current form.

As you know, I have long opposed late-term abortions, and I continue to do so except in those instances necessary to save the life of a woman or prevent serious harm to her health. When I was Governor of Arkansas, I signed a bill into law that barred third-trimester abortions, with an appropriate exception for life or health.

Your bill contains an exception that will adequately protect the lives and health of the small group of women in tragic circumstances who need an abortion performed at a late stage of pregnancy. At the same time, your bill prohibits any late-term abortions performed for reasons not related to the health or the life of the mother. This balance is an appropriate one which I -- and, I believe, most Americans -- would gladly make the nation's law.

Sincerely,

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Abortion - partial birth -
letters

THE WHITE HOUSE

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Mr Hoyer / Greenwood bill

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Abortion - partial birth -
Carroll

THE WHITE HOUSE

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July 22, 1998

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Steny:

I am writing to express my concern over Congress's intention to override my veto of H.R. 1122, the so-called partial birth bill, rather than to pass the legislation I have called for to prohibit this procedure except when necessary to save the life of the mother or prevent serious harm to her health. In taking this approach, Congress is jeopardizing the safety of women and using this painful issue as an opportunity to score political points, rather than to pass appropriate legislation.

The procedure addressed in H.R. 1122 poses a difficult and disturbing issue. I strongly believe that we generally should prohibit the use of this procedure. I have insisted, however, on exempting those few but tragic cases in which this procedure is necessary to save a woman's life or to protect her against serious injury. I again call upon Congress to add such a narrow, tightly drawn exception to this bill, so that I can sign the legislation and put an end to all other uses of this procedure.

As you know, I have long opposed late-term abortions regardless of the procedure used, and as Governor of Arkansas, I signed into law a bill that banned them, with an appropriate exception for the life or health of the mother. The legislation that you have sponsored with Representative Greenwood -- which prohibits all late-term abortions, except those necessary to save the life of a woman or prevent serious harm to her health -- is consistent with my principles. If Congress were to pass your bill, I would sign it immediately.

Congress's refusal to consider such constructive proposals -- proposals that would put an end to inappropriate abortions while protecting women from death or serious injury -- prevents us from resolving these issues and moving forward. Similarly, Congress's recent votes restricting safe medical choices and access to family planning information and services stand in the way of progress on these issues. I urge Congress once again to move beyond ideology and political maneuvering, to protect women's lives and health, and to reduce the need for abortions.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton