

ADDENDUM TO FISCAL NOTE ON HB 158

Rep. Larry G. Pittman

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The fiscal note states that the bill “does not include language to implement these changes.” It is assumed within the proposed amendment that the “existing legal personal protections” referred to in the fiscal note would simply be applied to any intentional destruction of a human life at any stage of development, prior to or after birth. If there is a need for further clarification of how this would be applied, that should come from further legislation pursuant to this amendment.

The fiscal note states that “the changes” required by this amendment “could result in an increase in live births,” as if that is undesirable. It is the intent of this amendment to end the legal destruction of innocent human lives, both before and after birth. That should always be considered a positive accomplishment. It is hoped that if abortion is made illegal, as it always should have been, more people will be more responsible in their sexual habits before producing a new human life unintentionally. Thus, the assumed increase in live births is conjectural, and cannot be accurately predicted.

The fiscal note states that the increase in live births would increase Medicaid costs. That may be somewhat accurate. However, the statement assumes that all live births will be to parents unable to afford labor and delivery and childcare expenses. That is not the case now, and will not be the case if this amendment becomes law. There will be some increase among those who qualify for Medicaid, of course; but not all live births are among those who would have to use Medicaid. While there may be some increase in Medicaid costs, human life should be valued as worth it.

The fiscal note seems to bemoan the likelihood that the amendment “could have a cost to agencies of the justice system.” There will likely be some of that. However, this seems to assume that no one now committing abortions would stop doing so once the practice is outlawed. HB 158 would anticipate that many abortionists will not want to risk breaking the law once this amendment is in force. Those who do persist deserve to be held accountable under the law, and the justice system should carry out the law accordingly.

The fiscal note further notes again that the amendment is “without implementing language.” This concern has already been addressed above. It is anticipated by the author of HB 158 that those costs will not be as much as the drafters of the fiscal note might think, also due to the anticipated cessation of abortions by those who will quit the practice, as stated above herein.

The costs anticipated by the fiscal note concerning Secretary of State responsibilities for preparing for the vote on the amendment may be accurate, but the same would be incurred for any proposed amendment.

The fiscal note states that more than 20,000 abortions are performed annually in North Carolina, and further states that “some portion of the pregnancies that currently end in abortion would instead result in additional births.” That is part of the intent of the amendment, which is to end legal abortion in this State. Such a result should be celebrated, not dreaded.

The fiscal note states anticipated cost for birthing and caring for children under Medicaid at a per child rate, which the author of HB 158 does not dispute. However, the fiscal note does not offer a projected total cost to Medicaid for this, because that would be purely speculative. Again, saving innocent human lives should be more of a concern than the cost of doing so, and there may not be as many children produced unintentionally because of the risk of bearing the consequences, as also stated above herein.

The fiscal note raises concerns about the cost of charging, convicting and punishing violators of the laws against murder under the proposed amendment. Those figures are probably accurate per case. However, HB 158 does not anticipate that there will be a significant number of cases, due to the fact that many of those who are now legally murdering innocent babies will not want to continue the practice and risk prosecution.

The fiscal note states an estimated number of incarcerations stated in numbers of prison beds that would be involved. This is pure speculation, based on an assumption that people now practicing abortion will not stop because of the risk of prosecution under the proposed amendment. It cannot be considered realistic.

The fiscal note again states a concern that the proposed amendment “does not propose implementing language.” Again, it should be understood that the intent of the amendment is that the practice of abortion, being an act of murder, should be treated the same as any other instance of murder under existing law.

Respectfully submitted,

Rep. Larry G. Pittman