

TESTIMONY REGARDING SB 33 (Nevers), Senate Health & Welfare Committee, 4/19/06

Good Morning, Mr. Chairman and Committee Members!

My name is Dr. W. A. Krotoski; I am a physician and retired medical scientist, and have lived in Baton Rouge since 1982. I represent *The Hippocratic Resource*, a Louisiana-wide organization of physicians and other health professionals, who have committed to promoting the principles of the Hippocratic Oath, the foundation of medical ethics. I am testifying today *in favor* of Senator Nevers' SB 33 for several reasons:

**First – There is absolutely no rational, scientific, medical or ethical reason to think that the unborn child is anything but human from the moment of fertilization, then throughout his or her developmental period in the womb.** This is *fully* supported by *in vitro* fertilization and DNA technologies, which could not function were that not so. (More obviously to anyone, no woman has ever given birth to a dog or cat, or any other animal!). The textbook, “Williams’ *Obstetrics*,” the obstetrician’s “bible,” has also clearly asserted that the physician attending a pregnant woman has responsibility for two patients – or more, in the case of twins or triplets, and so forth.

**Second – Abortion is severely hurtful to women.** In addition to post-abortive complications, including severe psychological dysfunction, decreased fertility, unplanned hysterectomy, bowel surgery and others, at least 470 maternal deaths have been recorded since legalization. Several of these have also been due to the abortion pill, RU-486 or mifepristone, whose use is now steadily increasing.

**Third – The initial legalization of abortion was effected through many deliberate misrepresentations of the biologic facts regarding early human life and its development in the womb –** and many of the same, false reasons are used to support it today.

**Fourth – Abortion’s legalization 33 years ago continues to destroy between 10,000 and 12,000 of such children in Louisiana every year;** it has been directly responsible for the deaths of at least 46,000,000 pre-born American children, with no end in sight.

**Finally,** I must also point out that, **according to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals’ statistics on abortions in our State, only one (1!) of 43,157 abortions done here over the four year period from 2001-2003, was in the rape or incest category.** That means that we sacrificed 43,156 unborn children for the principal reason used by many good people to rationalize to themselves that abortion should be legal. Frankly, that is a pretty poor trade-off!

As a physician, I took the Hippocratic Oath, which has long protected the *patient* in the practice of medicine. Patients have a general expectation that physicians of integrity will adhere to the Hippocratic Oath for their protection. They are *not* generally aware that the legalization of abortion by the Roe v. Wade decision of 33 years ago has not only caused a general weakening of the impact of that Oath – to the detriment of *all* patients – but has also *increased* the professional marginalization of medically licensed abortionists (who have chosen to abandon the Oath).,—.

I would like to quote one or two sentences from each of three, individual versions, as illustrated on this board:

The American Medical Association’s 1968 version stated (among other things, of course):

“I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel. I will not give to a woman an instrument to produce abortion.”

The National Catholic Bioethics Center’s 1995 version stated

“I will maintain the utmost respect for every human life from fertilization to natural death, and reject abortion that deliberately takes a unique human life.”

The Louisiana Medical Society’s *current* version states:

“To please no one will I prescribe a deadly drug, nor give advice which may cause death. Nor will I give a woman a pessary to produce abortion.”

In summary, I urge a strong vote *in favor* of Senator Nevers’ bill, SB33, and I *thank you* for your attention!

W. A. Krotoski, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H.