

HJR 53 -- AFFIRMING LIFE

SPONSOR: Moon

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 6 to 2.

Upon voter approval, this proposed Constitutional amendment declares that the term "person" under the Missouri Constitution includes every human being, including every preborn human child at every stage of biological development from the moment of conception until birth. The amendment declares that nothing in the Constitution of Missouri secures or protects a right to abortion or requires the funding of an abortion.

This bill is similar to HJR 18 (2017) and HJR 98 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that medical science has established that an embryo is a human life and therefore civil rights should extend to humans at all stages of development.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Moon; Missouri Baptist Convention; Mckenzi Knapp; Preston Knapp; Concerned Women for America of Missouri; Karen Leydens; Carol Fay; Ted Ballenger; Erma Stogsdill; Lois Hogan; Sandra Ballenger; Ron Staggs; and James Coyne.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that medical science has established that abortion and contraception are safe and integral parts of health care and that this bill would infringe on the rights of other religions to have their own beliefs about when life begins.

Testifying against the bill were Yvonne Treece, MD, Falog; David Seifer, American Society for Reproductive Medicine and Society for Assisted Reproduction Technology; Robin Utz; Jennifer Box; Barbara Collura, The National Infertility Association; Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri; Rachel Goldberg; American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri; Naral Pro-Choice Missouri; and Samantha Lund.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that this bill would not stand up at the federal level and that Roe v Wade needs to be overturned before this kind of legislation can take effect.

Testifying on the bill was Missouri Right to Life.