

Anti-abortion activists rally at Capitol

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Hundreds of anti-abortion activists Friday braved blustery weather to express solidarity with state politicians dedicated to restricting a practice equated by Gov. Sam Brownback to a "crime against humanity."

Brownback accepted an invitation from Kansans for Life to address the crowd, many of whom attended Mass before marching to the Statehouse, several days after more than 60 House members endorsed introduction of a sweeping abortion reform bill.

"Thank you for marching," the governor said at the outdoor rally. "We gather today for a celebration of life. Every human life is sacred."

Brownback urged an audience that included more than a dozen state senators and representatives to "never forget that this message is one of kindness, hope and compassion."

The injustice of legalized abortion shouldn't harden the heart, he said.

"The last century witnessed the greatest crimes against humanity in the whole catalog of our existence," he said. "Most of these crimes began with a denial that the other person was even a person."

Brownback refers to himself a pro-life, while decisions of Democratic Govs. Kathleen Sebelius and Mark Parkinson reflected pro-choice sentiment.

Mary Kay Culp, executive director of Kansans for Life, said women were not safe in the hands of abortion providers.

"It kills her own child and robs her of her heart, her soul and, as new research shows, often her health and future fertility," Culp said.

She said Kansans were weary of women being exploited by "secretive, cash-based abortion profiteers."

The House bill introduced by Rep. Lance Kinzer, R-Olathe, contains abortion regulation measures adopted by the Republican-led Legislature but vetoed by Sebelius and Parkinson.

Election of Brownback and departure of "radically pro-abortion governors" injected a new

dynamic into debate in the Capitol, Kinzer said.

A House committee scheduled a hearing Wednesday on the bill, which would broaden restrictions on late-term abortions, toughen the ban on partial-birth procedures and impose parental consent requirements for anyone under 18 seeking an abortion.

House Minority Leader Paul Davis, D-Lawrence, said the Legislature should focus at this juncture in the 2011 session on revitalizing the state's economy and expanding employment.

He said extreme elements of the Kansas Republican Party apparently don't view recovering from the recession as their top legislative priority.

"They seem to be obsessed with social issues of the past I think Kansans are tired of us debating," Davis said.

He questioned wisdom of a section in Kinzer's establishing a standard of two-parent consent for minors in cases involving "stable, intact families with no abuse." If the parents were divorced, the House bill would allow consent to be given by a single parent.

"I don't think that's a distinction the state ought to be making," Davis said.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS

See a [Spotted](#) ^[1] Gallery of photos from Friday's pro-life rally at the Statehouse.

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[1] <http://spotted.cjonline.com/galleries/index.php?id=478493>