

A Suggestion for Abortion Laws

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Current Legal Stance

- ▶ Pregnancy (unwanted) is the problem for which abortion is the solution.
- ▶ Legal imitations or exceptions on abortion make an exception for the life and health of the mother
- ▶ Such life and health are threatened by pregnancy

Raising a Question

- ▶ Pregnancy has risks and harms
- ▶ Abortion also has risks and harms
 - ▶ For the woman
 - ▶ For the child

Posing an Answer

- ▶ Reword Abortion laws:
- ▶ NOT: Abortion (after a certain stage) is **prohibited** except for the life and health of the mother
- ▶ BUT: Abortion (at every stage) is **permitted** except for the life and health of the mother

Implications A

- ▶ 1. Forces serious attention on what the harms of abortion are
- ▶ 2. -- and without threat to abortion rights (no one says they want abortions that cause women harm)
- ▶ 3. Therefore no reason, moral or legal, for abortion advocates to reject this law

Implications B

- ▶ 4. Careful and honest investigation required of what the harms of abortion are
- ▶ 5. No reason for supporters or opponents to reject such investigation.
 - ▶ It focuses all attention on the life and health of the woman, which everyone says they want

Implications C

- ▶ 6. A challenge to both sides:
 - ▶ To supporters of abortion:
Prove it causes women no harm by careful attention to all relevant research
 - ▶ To opponents of abortion
Prove it causes women harm by careful attention to all relevant research
- ▶ 7. Both sides now have the same interest despite their opposed stances

Implications 4

- ▶ 9. Supporters of abortion cannot complain.
 - ▶ This law allows abortion to any woman throughout pregnancy -- unless it is going to cause her harm
- ▶ 10. Opponents of abortion cannot complain.
 - ▶ This law allows them to end abortion by proving it always causes harm to the woman

Both sides have the same focus: serious attention to the life and health of the woman

A PERFECT SOLUTION?

- ▶ There seems no reason for anyone anywhere to reject this law and every reason for everyone to agree in supporting it
- ▶ Attention shifts from the law and courts and disputes and protests and anger and hostility
- ▶ It focuses instead on what it should always focus on: the woman's life and health