

### **Preventing Physician-Assisted Suicide, which is when a physician helps someone kill themselves.**

Lutheran Family Service has successfully worked to suppress the legalization of Physician Assisted Suicide (PAS) for nine years. Recent advancements of PAS in the nation have seen an expansion of eligibility in states where it is legal.

In your packet of resources, you will see (PAS) is legal in New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, Montana, Vermont, California, Colorado, Hawaii, New Jersey, Maine, and the District of Columbia. This means 73.4 million people in the U.S. now have access to PAS. However, both Oregon and Vermont have removed state residency requirements. Now, people from any state can go there to legally commit suicide with the aid of a doctor. Technically then, **everyone in the U.S. now has access to Physician Assisted Suicide.**

Many of the states where PAS is legal are pursuing expansion bills. These expansion bills include things like reducing the waiting period before the deadly drug could be prescribed. California went from 15 days to 48 hours. Also alarming, are considerations to allow others to administer the poison for people with disabilities unable to do so themselves. We move ever closer to proving once again the axiom: **assisted suicide always leads to euthanasia.**

### **Preventing Abortion, which is the killing of a child before he or she is born.**

The legal status of abortion in Iowa bans the abortion of unborn children whose heartbeat is detectable. That can be around six weeks gestation. There are exceptions to the law that include rape, incest, life of the mother, and fetal abnormalities. The ban was allowed to go into effect and enforcement in July 2024. There was nearly a 40% drop in Iowa abortions the month following the enforcement. That month saved 150 lives of unborn Iowa children.

Is there more to do for the protection of unborn life in Iowa? Yes! Those left unprotected are: children conceived from rape or incest; unborn children with abnormalities like Down Syndrome; unborn children who are transported to another state to be aborted; unborn children who are aborted illegally through medication abortion drugs sold to them despite Iowa law and embryos who are either destroyed or cryopreserved during In Vitro Fertilization.

Lutheran Family Service will continue to advocate for protection for all life. The appetite of the 91<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to move more legislation on the life issue is suppressed. There are opportunities to pass some legislation in support of life, but not necessarily life-saving in immediate terms.

Bills being considered in this session (regarding life) as of January 31, 2025 include:

- [SJR 1](#) is a bill that would change the Iowa Constitution to include a right to abortion. Lutheran Family Service is opposed to this bill. It is not expected to pass, but we must remain vigilant and work to educate all about the value of human life.
- [HF 103](#) - is a bill about the treatment of pregnant students in state colleges who should be given reasonable accommodations (LFS is in favor of this bill as it encourages pregnancy over abortion.)
- [HF106](#) is a bill that would give the right for civil action in cases of wrongful fetal death. (LFS is in favor of this bill).
- [SSB1028](#) is a bill that would secure an accurate depiction of fetal development for school curriculums. (LFS is in favor of this bill). There are companions to this bill in the House Chamber with a bit different language, but essentially doing the same things. The language contained in the SSB1028 bill is the preferred language.
- We are keeping watch on an additional bill to be filed that will make abortion medical a controlled class IV substance making it much more difficult to obtain.

### **What Can You Do Today?** Talk to your legislator about the following:

- Remind your legislator that God gives value to every person no matter the circumstances of their conception. They deserve to be protected.
- Show them how God's word supports that.
- Pray with them to be rooted in God's word, protected from enemies, and receive wisdom from the Holy Spirit.
- Encourage your congregation to make their voice known to legislators by making a phone call, writing a letter, sending an email, or through an in-person appointment.

### **What Can You Do After Your Visit to the Capitol to Support Life in Your Congregation and Community?**

- EDUCATE
  - Use your resource packet to provide ongoing education and attention to God's truth for life issues
    - Legislative Priorities info
    - Physician Assisted Suicide Information
    - Better Together graphic to show how LFS and Many Hearts are working together with Pregnancy Resource Centers and women's health providers
  - Include this web link: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find> in your bulletin to help your congregation find and contact legislators when needed.
- ACTION
  - Use the LCMS Government Servant sheet for an insert, in-church prayer, and for members at home.
  - Gather a group from your congregation to hang Many Hearts Unplanned Pregnancy Support tear-away posters. Many Hearts is the pregnancy counseling division of Lutheran Family Service.
  - Find your closest Pregnancy Resource Center (PRC). Bring the Many Hearts Unplanned Pregnancy Materials to them to make them aware of services that would greatly benefit their clients who are deciding between parenting and placing for adoption.
  - Encourage congregation members to run for public office, volunteer, support, or join the Board of Directors of your local PRC.

### **How will Lutheran Family Service Support You and Your Efforts to Protect Life?**

- You'll receive "life issues" legislative updates via email on important actions taken by the courts or legislature.
- You can schedule a life issues presentation or life Sunday at your congregation to touch on topics of abortion, ways to support women facing unplanned pregnancy and/or single mothers, physician-assisted suicide, hospice, advance directives, and more. Reach out to Cassie Beltz at [CBeltz@lutheranfamilyservice.org](mailto:CBeltz@lutheranfamilyservice.org).
- Together, Many Hearts Unplanned Pregnancy Support and Lutheran Family Service adoption ministry will be serving women and families in your community and beyond – including all of Iowa, Eastern South Dakota, Eastern Nebraska, and North & Central Illinois.