

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2003

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 2431

4
5 By: Representative Lamoureux
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For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO REQUIRE PARENTAL CONSENT BEFORE
10 PERFORMING AN ABORTION ON A MINOR; AND FOR OTHER
11 PURPOSES.
12

Subtitle

13
14 AN ACT TO REQUIRE PARENTAL CONSENT
15 BEFORE PERFORMING AN ABORTION ON A
16 MINOR.
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Section § 20-16-801 is amended to read as
22 follows:

23 20-16-801. Notification required.

24 ~~No abortion operation shall be performed upon an unemancipated minor,~~
25 ~~or upon a woman for whom a guardian or custodian has been appointed because~~
26 ~~of a finding of incompetency, until at least forty eight (48) hours after~~
27 ~~written notice of the pending operation has been delivered in the manner, and~~
28 ~~subject to the exceptions, provided in this subchapter.~~

29 Except as otherwise provided in §§ 20-16-804 and 20-16-805, no person
30 shall perform an abortion upon an unemancipated minor, or upon a woman for
31 whom a guardian or custodian has been appointed because of a finding of
32 incompetency, unless he or she or his or her agent first obtains the written
33 consent of either parent or the legal guardian or custodian.
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35 SECTION 2 Arkansas Code Section § 20-16-802 is amended to read as
36 follows:



20-16-802. Definitions.

As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Abortion" shall mean the intentional termination of the pregnancy of a woman known to be pregnant with an intention other than to increase the probability of a live birth or to remove a dead or dying fetus;

(2) "Minor" means an individual under the age of eighteen (18) years;

(3) "Parent" shall mean ~~both parents~~ either parent of the pregnant woman if they are both living; one (1) parent of the pregnant woman if only one (1) is living or if the second one (1) cannot be located through reasonably diligent effort; or the court-appointed guardian or custodian if the pregnant woman has one; and

(4) "Unemancipated minor" means a minor who is under the care, custody, and control of her parent or parents.

SECTION 3. Arkansas code Section § 20-16-803 is amended to read as follows:

20-16-803. Manner of notice.

~~(a) Notice shall be addressed to the parent at the usual place of abode of the parent and delivered personally to the parent by the physician or an agent.~~

~~(b) In lieu of the delivery required by subsection (a), notice shall be made by certified mail addressed to the parent at the usual place of abode of the parent, with return receipt requested and delivery restricted to the addressee. Delivery shall be deemed to occur at twelve o'clock noon on the next day, subsequent to mailing, on which regular mail delivery takes place.~~

(a) The person who performs the abortion or his or her agent shall obtain or be provided with the written consent from either parent or legal guardian.

(b) The written consent shall include, but not be limited to the following information:

(1) Name and birthdate of the minor;

(2) Name of the parent or legal guardian;

(3) Statement from the parent or legal guardian that he or she is aware that the minor desires an abortion and that he or she does consent to the abortion;

1 (4) The date; and

2 (5) Notarized signature of the parent or legal guardian.

3 (c) A notarized signature is not required if the person who shall
4 perform the abortion or his or her agent witnesses the signature of the
5 parent or legal guardian and signs the written consent as a witness.

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7 SECTION 4 Arkansas Code Section § 20-16-804 is amended to read as
8 follows:

9 20-16-804. Judicial relief from requirement.

10 Notwithstanding the provisions of §§ 20-16-801 and 20-16-803, if a
11 pregnant minor or incompetent woman elects not to allow the ~~notification~~
12 consent of one or both parents or guardian or custodian, then, in that event:

13 (1)(A) Any judge of a probate court shall, upon petition or
14 motion and after an appropriate hearing, authorize a physician to perform the
15 abortion if said judge determines that the pregnant minor or incompetent
16 woman is mature and capable of giving informed consent to the proposed
17 abortion.

18 (B) If said judge determines that the pregnant minor or
19 incompetent woman is not mature, or if the pregnant woman does not claim to
20 be mature, the judge shall determine whether the performance of an abortion
21 upon her without ~~notification~~ consent of her parents, guardian, or custodian
22 would be in her best interests and shall authorize a physician to perform the
23 abortion without such ~~notification~~ consent if said judge concludes that the
24 pregnant minor or incompetent woman’s best interests would be served thereby.

25 (2) Such a pregnant minor or incompetent woman may participate in
26 proceedings in the court on her own behalf. However, the court shall advise
27 her that she has a right to court-appointed counsel and shall, upon her
28 request, provide her with such counsel.

29 (3) Proceedings in the court under this subchapter shall be
30 confidential and shall be given such precedence over other pending matters so
31 that the court may reach a decision promptly and without delay so as to serve
32 the best interests of the pregnant minor or incompetent woman. The judge
33 shall make in writing specific factual findings and legal conclusions
34 supporting the decision and shall order a record of the evidence to be
35 maintained, including the judge’s own findings and conclusions.

36 (4) An expedited confidential appeal shall be available to any

1 such pregnant minor or incompetent woman for whom the court denies an order
2 authorizing an abortion without ~~notification~~ consent. An order authorizing an
3 abortion without ~~notification~~ consent shall not be subject to appeal.

4 (5) No filing fees shall be required of any such pregnant minor
5 or incompetent woman at either the trial or the appellate level.

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7 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code Section § 20-16-805 is amended to read as
8 follows:

9 20-16-805. Limitations on requirement.

10 ~~Notification~~ Consent shall not be required under this subchapter if:

11 (1) The attending physician certifies in the pregnant minor or
12 incompetent woman's medical record that the abortion is necessary to prevent
13 the woman's death and there is insufficient time to ~~provide the required~~
14 ~~notice~~ obtain the required consent; or

15 ~~(2) The abortion is authorized in writing by the person or~~
16 ~~persons who are entitled to notice; or~~

17 ~~(3)~~(2) A pregnant minor or incompetent woman declares that she is
18 a victim of child abuse or neglect, as defined in § 12-12-502, provided that
19 a report of such abuse or neglect shall be made as provided in § 12-12-504.

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21 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code Section 20-16-806 is amended to read as
22 follows:

23 20-16-806. Penalty.

24 (a) The performance of an abortion in violation of this subchapter
25 shall be a Class A misdemeanor and shall be grounds for a civil action by a
26 person ~~wrongfully denied notification~~ whose consent is required.

27 ~~(b) A person shall not be held liable under this subchapter if:~~

28 ~~(1) The person establishes by written evidence that the person~~
29 ~~relied upon evidence sufficient to convince a careful and prudent person that~~
30 ~~the representations of the pregnant minor or incompetent woman regarding~~
31 ~~information necessary to comply with this subchapter were bona fide and true;~~
32 ~~or~~

33 ~~(2) If the person attempted with reasonable diligence to deliver~~
34 ~~notice, but was unable to do so.~~

35 ~~(e)~~(b) Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to allow the
36 charging or conviction of a woman with any criminal offense in the death of

1 her own unborn child in utero.

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SECTION 7 Arkansas Code Section 20-16-808 is amended to read as follows:

20-16-808. When notification of parent not required.

~~Notification~~ Consent under this subchapter shall not be required to be ~~given to a parent~~ obtained from a parent if:

(1) ~~The~~ Both of the parent's whereabouts are unknown; or

~~(2) The parent has not been in contact with the minor's custodial parent or the minor for at least one (1) year; or~~

~~(3)~~(2) If the minor states by affidavit that the custodial parent has committed incest with the minor or raped the minor or otherwise physically or sexually abused the minor and the minor has had no contact with the noncustodial parent for at least one (1) year or their whereabouts are unknown.