

# 2014 Legislative Session Wrap-Up: Many Successes - Few Disappointments

Missouri Right to Life thanks the Missouri Legislature for the many successes of this legislative session. There were true acts of courage and commitment to protecting innocent human life. We also want to thank our lobbyist Susan Klein for her tireless efforts and willingness to stand alone against great opposition to advance the legislative priorities of Missouri Right to Life.

Passage of the 72-hour Reflection Period, when signed by the Governor, will extend the current 24-hour reflection period after consultation with the abortionist to 72 hours. This law will allow women adequate time to make this life-changing decision.

Various pro-life programs have played a large part in the reduction of abortions in Missouri from a high of 21,761 in 1980 to 9,027 in 2012 (the latest figures available). The Alternatives to Abortion program, which funds grants to pregnancy resource centers, and the Tax Credit Program for Pregnancy Resource Centers and Maternity Home donations were protected during this session. The tax credit program cap was raised to \$2.5 million from \$2 million. These programs provide assistance to women facing unplanned pregnancies.

Pro-life protective language was added to one \$4.5 million program in HB 2007 to guarantee that these public funds would not be used to clone and kill embryos in the name of economic development.

In addition, MRL along with the help of courageous pro-life legislators working against incredible pressure from pro-cloning interest groups, stopped HB 1495 from passing without pro-life protective language that was stripped from the bill in the Senate. The passage of this bill could have funded the cloning and killing of human embryos in the name of economic development. These efforts prevented the taxpayers of Missouri from becoming partners in research that could have destroyed countless human embryos.

Missouri Right to Life testified in favor of and promoted the Show Me Healthy Babies Program as a stand-alone bill. When that bill did not advance, the language of the Healthy Babies Program was successfully amended on a different health care bill. This bill is on its way to the governor. This is a health insurance program for low income unborn children to ensure a healthy baby is born.

Also amended on that same health bill was language requiring the Department of Health and Senior Services to establish cord blood collection sites across the state for transportation to the St Louis Cord Blood Bank. Missouri Right to Life also testified in favor of and promoted this original bill.

In spite of all these wonderful successes, it is a great disappointment that the Missouri legislature did not advance HB 1478 and/or SB 770. HB 1478 and SB 770 would have statutorily required annual on-site inspections of abortion clinics. While the language requiring one annual on-site inspection was amended to SB 660 in the House, a budget prioritization bill, that bill did not make it through the Senate in the last days of the session. These inspection bills were critical to the safety of women seeking abortion services in Missouri. Twenty-three ambulances have been called to the Planned Parenthood facility in St. Louis in the last 4 years. In addition, after many complaints an inspection of that facility was done and numerous violations were recorded. To view a list of those violations go to [missourilife.org](http://missourilife.org).

Senator Wayne Wallingford and Rep. Kathy Swan are committed to pre-file on December 1, of this year for the 2015 legislative session and bring back legislation for one annual on-site inspection of abortion clinics to ensure protection of women's health care.

MRL will be reviewing all bills and amendments that passed in the final days and hours of the 2014 legislative session. Look for a complete update in the next MRL news.