

As a Vermont resident for most of my nearly 68 years, I would like to voice my impassioned opposition to this proposed law. I am not going to try and invoke morality, as anyone who would even consider voting for this law is obviously not open to such arguments. I will only say on that point that I became a new father again at age 65, and the joy it has brought me is indescribable. It saddens me so much that so many such bundles of joy are not even being given a chance at life.

No, I will make my argument much more practical. Every one of you legislators, I presume, has expectations of someday growing old. Some of you are there already. Who do you expect is going to take care of you? All of us are, or should be aware that Social Security is in trouble. It is in trouble because my generation and subsequent generations did not have enough children. This is not a problem unique to the United States, it exists all over the industrialized world. China, Japan, and Europe are all in worse shape than we are. As we get old, we are going to need people to work, grow food, process it and make it available to us, and make the devices and products that we wish to have. In addition, we will require increasing amounts of health care, and many of us will ultimately require nursing home care. Who is going to provide all of that? Our birth rate is well below replacement level. Many of us are going to grow old only to discover that we are on our own.

But this is only part of the picture. It has often been said that a society is judged by how it treats the most vulnerable in its midst. Surely there is nobody more vulnerable, nor more innocent, than a baby in the womb. But there is a close second, and that is the elderly who are no longer able to care for themselves. If this bill is enacted it is certain that the supply of workers in 30, 40, and 50 years is going to be less. And the moral implications cannot be ignored. If we find it acceptable to kill a baby before it is born just because it is inconvenient, how long before we decide that it is acceptable to kill an old person who is no longer productive just because it is inconvenient to support them? Consider this carefully, because those of you that vote for this may find yourselves on the wrong side of that calculation someday.

But there is a much better solution readily available. There are many, many couples today who desperately desire children, and for one reason or another, cannot have them. Babies available for adoption are extremely hard to find in this country, largely because abortion is so easily accessible. Many doctors have testified that there is no medical reason for killing a viable fetus; it is in fact easier and less risky to the mother to deliver it alive. So why not concentrate on encouraging women who are pregnant and for whatever reason do not want to or cannot raise their babies to give them up for adoption? This is a much better, moral, and humane decision for all involved.

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