

CUOMO ENDANGERS MINORITY WOMEN

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo is about to unveil what promises to be the most radical proposal ever entertained at the state level. It's also the most dangerous, especially for poor minority women. While Cuomo has yet to reveal the details of his abortion bill, from what we know there will be no restrictions on this life-ending procedure. Abortion would be removed from the penal code, and would instead be regulated through public health law. Practically speaking, this means that an unborn child wouldn't be considered a victim in a crime where he is intentionally killed.

Perhaps most ominous, at least for poor African-American and Hispanic women, it would mean that non-physicians could abort their babies. In other words, Park Avenue white girls will have their abortions attended to by licensed physicians, while poor women of color will be serviced by non-doctors. Guess who will be most at risk when complications arise? Yet it is the so-called champions of the poor and non-whites, e.g., Planned Parenthood and the *New York Times*, who are the strongest proponents of this two-class, racially divisive system.

As always, no one suffers more from liberalized abortion laws than minorities. In New York State the abortion rate is double the national average, and in New York City the rate for black women exceeds 60 percent. This phenomenon is not by accident—it is the result of public policy; in February 2013, it was reported that the “morning-after pill” in New York City was being distributed without parental consent, in schools that served mostly African-Americans and Latinos.

This isn't the Ku Klux Klan pushing to lower medical standards in abortion clinics with a high population of non-white women. It's mostly white, well-educated friends of the poor. While

this may not be their intent, nevertheless large numbers of women, and children of color, are being treated like guinea pigs. What's even more troubling is the Cuomo administration's failure to learn from the Pennsylvania experience: when abortion standards are relaxed, it opens the door to abuse.

Under Pennsylvania Governor Robert Casey, Sr., a Catholic pro-life Democrat, abortion clinics were held to rigid standards. But after Casey left office in 1995, a more "abortion-friendly" milieu took root. Authorities admit that inspections of abortion clinics stopped completely in some locales. Enter Dr. Kermit Gosnell, who on March 18th was put on trial for killing one woman and seven babies born alive. His clinic is now known as a "house of horrors," a place where his untrained staff helped deliver babies who were then killed with scissors. Gosnell would plunge scissors into their necks, cutting their spinal cords. He did this at least 16,000 times. His clients were all poor women who lived in the inner-city neighborhoods that comprise West Philadelphia. Gosnell never received obstetrics or gynecology certification.

Gosnell wasn't actually apprehended by state abortion inspectors. Instead, his "house of horrors" was discovered accidentally in 2010 by FBI agents looking for drugs. They found fetal remains stored in jars and freezers, along with dirty medical equipment. After speaking with the authorities, Gosnell reportedly ate dinner, never removing his bloody latex gloves. To make matters even more sickening, Gosnell's lawyer told the court that his client was a "victim of an elitist, racist prosecution." That Gosnell intentionally chose to murder poor non-whites, many of them immigrants, seems to have escaped Gosnell's attorney.

After Pennsylvania lawmakers learned of Gosnell's monstrous acts, they passed a bill in 2011 that outlined new criteria for facilities that perform surgical abortions. In 2012, 92 abortion restrictions were passed. Today there are 17 abortion providers left in Pennsylvania; in 2012, abortions declined by

44.8 percent (a decline in abortions for the third year in a row). Though there's still work to be done (there has been a spike in abortion complications) medical standards have increased, and poorly trained staff have been eliminated.

Sadly, instead of raising the qualifications for those in the abortion industry, Governor Cuomo wants to lower them. While Gosnell's operation wouldn't be legal, still, by lowering standards, we're likely to learn of more horror stories, not less. Moreover, it is not just a change in credentials that is at stake; when expectations decline (as happened in Pennsylvania once Casey left office), it sends a message that is picked up by everyone. That the message is not one that will result in safer conditions for black and Hispanic women is beyond debate.

Currently, New York State law says that only a "duly licensed physician" may perform an abortion, but under Cuomo any "licensed healthcare practitioner" could do the job. Even honest abortion supporters know how irresponsible this idea is. Even the ACLU admitted that allowing non-physicians to do abortions put women's lives in jeopardy.

While Governor Cuomo's intention isn't to punish poor black and Hispanic women, his proposal would do just that. It would allow abortionists who aren't trained as physicians to put these women at greater risk than their more affluent white cohorts. This alone should be enough to convince the governor not to go down that road. But don't bet on it.

This is a shorter version of Bill Donohue's article that was recently published by Newsmax.