## WHO WANTS ABORTION WITHOUT RESTRICTIONS?

## **Bill Donohue**

Most Americans are conflicted about abortion: they don't want it banned in all circumstances, but they also don't support abortion for any reasons and at any time of pregnancy. In other words, most Americans want abortion legal but restricted. Most but not all. There are some who favor abortion unlimited—for any reason and at time of gestation. The media will tell you this isn't true. They're lying.

In September, Vice President Kamala Harris was interviewed on "Face the Nation" by Margaret Brennan. Brennan made the point that Republicans are saying they support abortions "up until, you know, birth." Harris replied, "Which is ridiculous." Brennan agreed, saying, "Which is statistically not accurate."

Republican candidate for president, Chris Christie, told Mika Brzezinski on MSNBC that in his state of New Jersey abortion is legal "up to nine months." She disagreed, saying, "It's not an abortion at nine months. And there's not a doctor that would do it. And it only happens in extremely severe circumstances."

"The claim that Democrats support abortion up until the moment of birth is entirely misleading." That's what former White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said on her MSNBC show.

Jim Acosta of CNN took issue with a family leader on this subject, saying, "Democrats are not in favor of abortion right up until birth."

On "Meet the Press," former President Donald Trump said that some Democrats support abortion up to "nine months and even after birth you're allowed to terminate the baby." The NBC host, Kristen Welker, said, "Democrats are not saying that."

Steve Benen, an MSNBC producer for "The Rachel Maddow Show," also took issue with Trump's claim that some Democrats support "after-birth" abortion. "There is no such thing. The claim is simply insane."

All of these people who defend the Democrats on this issue are wrong. I will prove it.

Let's first remember that the entire case for abortion was initially built on a string of lies. Don't take my word for it—read what Dr. Bernard Nathanson and Lawrence Lader said about this when they were plotting their strategy to legalize abortion. They were key players in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

They coined phrases such as "Freedom of choice" and "Women must have control over their bodies." Nathanson said, "I remember laughing when we made up those slogans. We were looking for some sexy, catchy slogans to capture public opinion. They were very cynical slogans then, just as all these slogans today are very, very, cynical."

(Nathanson, who performed thousands of abortions, finally came over to our side. He even converted to Catholicism.)

Nathanson and Lader, working with feminist Betty Friedan, knew that in the days before abortion was legalized public opinion polls would not support their cause. "Knowing that if a true poll were taken, we would be soundly defeated, we simply fabricated the results of fictional polls. We announced to the media that we had taken polls and that 60 percent of Americans were in favor of permissive abortions. This is the tactic of the self-fulfilling lie. Few people care to be in the minority."

They also lied about the data. They did so by "fabricating the number of illegal abortions done annually in the U.S. The actual figure was approaching 10,000, but the figure we gave to the media was 1 million. Repeating the big lie often enough

convinces the public. The number of women dying from illegal abortions was around 200-250 annually. The figure we constantly fed to the media was 10,000."

Late-term abortions, contrary to what some say, are more common than are reported. Perhaps no one performed more of them than Dr. George Tiller. In 1995 he told his fans, "We have some experience with late terminations; about 10,000 patients between 24 and 36 weeks and something like 800 fetal anomalies between 26 and 36 weeks in the past 5 years."

Ron Fitzsimmons used to tell the media that partial-birth abortions—where the baby is 80 percent born—were extremely rare. Then in 1995 he went on national TV and admitted that he "lied through [his] teeth," saying he was just spouting "the party line."

In 2019, the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute admitted that at least 12,000 late-term abortions take place annually in the U.S. In 2023, a fact checker at the *Washington Post* conceded that at least 10,000 late-term abortions take place each year.

New York Mayor Ed Koch and New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan were both abortion-rights defenders, but they drew the line when it came to partial-birth abortions. Moynihan properly called it "infanticide."

Today, there are Democrats such as Pennsylvania Senator John Fetterman who believe in no restrictions on abortion. When asked during a debate, "Are there any limits on abortion you would find appropriate," he answered, "I don't believe so."

In 2015, when Debbie Wasserman Schultz, chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, was asked if she was okay "with killing a 7-pound baby that's just not born yet," she replied that she supports "letting women and their doctors make this decision without government getting involved." Senator Rand Paul rightly noted, "Well, it sounds like her answer is yes, that she's OK with killing a 7-pound baby."

In 2020, when Vice President Mike Pence called out Democrats for supporting abortion without restrictions, he was challenged by Jane Timm of NBC News. "Elective abortions do not occur up until the moment of birth," she said.

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, rebutted her argument. "Believe it or not, 22 states—almost half—allow birth day abortion. And in seven of those, women don't need a reason. A pregnant mom at 39 weeks can literally walk into a willing clinic and ask for an abortion, no questions asked."

Perkins knows what he is talking about. Quite frankly, under Roe v. Wade, abortion-on-demand, while not a de jure right (it was not permitted after viability except in limited cases), was a de facto right. For proof, consider Doe v. Bolton, the companion case to Roe; it opened the door to abortion-on-demand.

In *Roe*, the high court said the states may outlaw abortion "except where it is necessary, in appropriate medical judgment, for the preservation of the life or health of the mother." The ruling in *Doe* defined what an "appropriate medical judgment" was. It entailed the "physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the women's age—relevant to the well-being of the patient."

Not surprisingly, every state law that attempted to limit post-viability abortions to those necessary for the *physical* health of the women failed in court when challenged. In effect, the joint decisions in *Roe* and *Doe* legalized abortion up until birth. So when Democrats say they simply want to codify *Roe*, what they are saying is they want to make all abortions legal, at any time during pregnancy.

In fact, in 2022, the Democrats sought to pass the Women's Health Protection Act, which would further ensure that abortions through term be honored, but it was narrowly

defeated.

Some Democrat governors actually favor allowing a baby who is born alive from a botched abortion to die unattended.

On January 22, 2019, New York State Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed legislation that allows premature babies who survive a chemical abortion to be denied treatment. Shortly thereafter, the Democrat Governor from Virginia, Ralph Northam, signaled he was not content to allow abortion up until birth.

If a baby survived an abortion, he said, "The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated if that's what the mother and the family desired, and then a discussion would ensue between the physicians and the mother."

It was so thoughtful of Gov. Northam, who is a pediatrician, to assure us that the baby would be "kept comfortable" before they put him down or let him die.

In 2019, New York U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand told a reporter, "Infanticide does not exist." This was *after* Cuomo and Northam okayed it. In fact, when she said this, Montana Gov. Steve Bullock, a Democrat, had just vetoed a bill that would have required children born alive who survived an abortion to be treated like any other person.

At the federal level in 2019, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act was blocked by Senate Democrats. Presidential candidates Senators Bernie Sanders, Amy Klobuchar and Elizabeth Warren voted to stop the bill from being considered. Filibuster tactics killed the bill.

On January 11, 2023, all but two congressional Democrats voted to kill this same bill. They said there was enough legislation on the books already to protect against infanticide. As we have seen, this is patently untrue. Even so, when it comes to laws against discrimination, Democrats can never get enough legislation on the books.

One Democrat who has been a longtime proponent of allowing kids who survive an abortion to die unattended is Barack Obama. When he was in the Illinois state senate, he opposed bills in 2001, 2002 and 2003 that would secure medical care for these children.

Joe Biden entered the U.S. Senate in 1973, the same year as Roe. The next year he said this decision went "too far" and that a woman seeking an abortion should not have the "sole right to say what should happen to her body."

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, he voted against public funding of abortion and even introduced the "Biden Amendment" in 1981 prohibiting foreign-aid funding of biomedical research involving abortion. In the 1990s, Biden voted consistently to ban partial-birth abortions, and continued to do so in 2003.

Then he pivoted. In 2007, Biden criticized the Supreme Court decision upholding the ban on partial-birth abortion, calling it "paternalistic." The next year he said he opposed overturning *Roe*. In 2012, he opined that the government does not have "a right to tell other people that women, they can't control their body."

In 2019, Biden said that for the first time he opposed the "Hyde Amendment" that bans the federal funding of abortion. In 2020, he came clean, saying he supports abortion "under *any* circumstances (my italic)."

In 2021, President Biden said, "I respect those who believe life begins at the moment of conception. I don't agree, but I respect that." He never indicated when he thought life begins or why he disagrees with science. This past June he said he's "not big on abortion," never saying why not. But he did say he supports *Roe*.

So there we have it. Contrary to what the media and the Democrats have been saying, there are plenty of Democrats who support legalized abortion through nine months of pregnancy

and for any reason whatsoever. There are even some who have signed legislation allowing babies to die without medical treatment if they survive a botched abortion. Moreover, bills to secure treatment for these children are blocked by Democrats.

The defense of the indefensible is immoral enough, but when public officials lie about their support for abortion-on-demand, often including infanticide, they are beyond the pale. But as I said in the beginning, lying about abortion has been routine from the get-go of this movement.