

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 57th Legislature (2020)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
4 FOR

5 SENATE BILL NO. 1728

By: Bullard and Boggs of the
Senate

6 and

7 Gann and Olsen of the House

8
9
10 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

11 An Act relating to abortion; creating the Unborn
12 Person Wrongful Death Act; providing short title;
13 amending 12 O.S. 2011, Section 1053, which relates to
14 wrongful death actions; modifying requirements for
15 award of certain damages; defining term; modifying
16 persons with standing to bring certain actions;
17 construing provisions; providing exceptions;
18 prohibiting certain waiver of liability; modifying
19 statutory language; amending 63 O.S. 2011, Section 1-
20 730, which relates to definitions; modifying
21 definitions; providing for certain enforcement under
22 certain circumstances; providing for noncodification;
23 and providing an effective date.

24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be
codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Unborn Person
Wrongful Death Act".

1 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 12 O.S. 2011, Section 1053, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 Section 1053. A. When the death of one is caused by the
4 wrongful act or omission of another, the personal representative of
5 the former may maintain an action therefor against the latter, or
6 his or her personal representative if he or she is also deceased, if
7 the former might have maintained an action, had he or she lived,
8 against the latter, or his or her representative, for an injury for
9 the same act or omission. The action must be commenced within two
10 (2) years.

11 B. The damages recoverable in actions for wrongful death as
12 provided in this section shall include the following:

13 1. Medical and burial expenses, which shall be distributed to
14 the person or governmental agency as defined in Section 5051.1 of
15 Title 63 of the Oklahoma Statutes who paid these expenses, or to the
16 decedent's estate if paid by the estate. The provisions of this
17 paragraph shall not apply to the cost of an abortion in actions
18 maintained pursuant to subsection F of this section;

19 2. The loss of consortium and the grief of the surviving
20 spouse, which shall be distributed to the surviving spouse-;

21 3. The mental pain and anguish suffered by the decedent, which
22 shall be distributed to the surviving spouse and children, if any,
23 or next of kin in the same proportion as personal property of the
24 decedent. For the purposes of actions maintained pursuant to

1 subsection F of this section, "next of kin" as used in this
2 paragraph shall mean the parent or grandparent who maintained the
3 action as provided for in paragraph 3 of subsection F of this
4 section;

5 4. The pecuniary loss to the survivors based upon properly
6 admissible evidence with regard thereto including, but not limited
7 to, the age, occupation, earning capacity, health habits, and
8 probable duration of the decedent's life, which must inure to the
9 exclusive benefit of the surviving spouse and children, if any, or
10 next of kin, and shall be distributed to them according to their
11 pecuniary loss. For the purposes of actions maintained pursuant to
12 subsection F of this section, "next of kin" as used in this
13 paragraph shall mean the parent or grandparent who maintained the
14 action as provided for in paragraph 3 of subsection F of this
15 section; and

16 5. The grief and loss of companionship of the children and
17 parents of the decedent, which shall be distributed to them
18 according to their grief and loss of companionship.

19 C. In proper cases, as provided by Section 9.1 of Title 23 of
20 the Oklahoma Statutes, punitive or exemplary damages may also be
21 recovered against the person proximately causing the wrongful death
22 or the person's representative if such person is deceased. Such
23 damages, if recovered, shall be distributed to the surviving spouse
24 and children, if any, or next of kin in the same proportion as

1 personal property of the decedent. For the purposes of actions
2 maintained pursuant to subsection F of this section, "next of kin"
3 as used in this paragraph shall mean the parent or grandparent who
4 maintained the action as provided for in paragraph 3 of subsection F
5 of this section.

6 D. Where the recovery is to be distributed according to a
7 person's pecuniary loss or loss of companionship, the judge shall
8 determine the proper division.

9 E. The above-mentioned distributions shall be made after the
10 payment of legal expenses and costs of the action.

11 F. 1. The provisions of this section shall also be available
12 for the death of an unborn ~~child~~ person as defined in Section 1-730
13 of Title 63 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

14 2. The provisions of this subsection shall ~~not~~ apply to:

15 ~~a. acts which cause the death of an unborn child if those~~
16 ~~acts were committed during a legal abortion to which~~
17 ~~the pregnant woman consented, or~~

18 ~~b. acts which are committed pursuant to the usual and~~
19 ~~customary standards of medical practice during~~
20 ~~diagnostic testing or therapeutic treatment~~

21 person in utero if:

22 a. the physician who performed the abortion or the
23 referring physician fails to obtain and document the
24 voluntary and informed consent of the pregnant woman

1 pursuant to Section 1-738.2 of Title 63 of the
2 Oklahoma Statutes,

3 b. the pregnant woman withdraws her consent to the
4 abortion prior to performance of the abortion,

5 c. the pregnant woman undergoes the abortion due to
6 coercion from a third party,

7 d. the physician fails to obtain and document proof of
8 age demonstrating that the pregnant woman is not a
9 minor, or, in the case of a minor, fails to obtain:

10 (1) parental consent to the abortion pursuant to
11 Section 1-740.2 of Title 63 of the Oklahoma
12 Statutes,

13 (2) proof that the pregnant woman, although a minor,
14 is emancipated, or

15 (3) judicial authorization of the abortion without
16 parental notification pursuant to Section 1-740.3
17 of Title 63 of the Oklahoma Statutes,

18 e. the physician who performed the abortion causes the
19 woman physical or psychological harm, the possibility
20 of which she did not foresee or was not informed of at
21 the time of her consent,

22 f. the physician who performed the abortion fails to
23 screen the pregnant woman and document such screening
24 for risk factors associated with a heightened risk of

1 adverse consequences from abortion which a reasonably
2 prudent physician would screen for,
3 g. the physician fails to screen the pregnant woman and
4 document such screening for physical or psychological
5 impairment of judgment due to factors including, but
6 not limited to, drugs, alcohol, illness or fatigue,
7 h. the physician fraudulently induces the pregnant woman
8 to obtain the abortion or gives misleading or false
9 information in response to a pregnant woman's inquiry,
10 or
11 i. there exist any other circumstances which violate
12 state law.

13 The provisions of this paragraph shall not be construed to apply
14 to cases in which a physician licensed to practice medicine in this
15 state attempts, in a reasonably prudent manner, to prevent the death
16 of an unborn person or a pregnant woman.

17 3. A parent or grandparent of the deceased unborn person is
18 entitled to maintain an action against the physician who caused the
19 death of an unborn person under the conditions provided by
20 subparagraphs a through i of paragraph 2 of this subsection;
21 provided, however, the parent or grandparent may not maintain such
22 action if the parent or grandparent coerced the mother of the unborn
23 person to abort the unborn person.
24

1 4. Liability for wrongful death by the physician under this
2 section shall not be waived by the pregnant woman prior to
3 performance of the abortion. A physician shall not request, orally,
4 on a written form or in any other manner, that the pregnant woman
5 wave the liability of the physician for wrongful death related to
6 the abortion as a condition of performing an abortion.

7 5. Under no circumstances shall the mother of the unborn ~~child~~
8 person be found liable for causing the death of the unborn ~~child~~
9 person unless the mother has committed a crime that caused the death
10 of the unborn ~~child~~ person.

11 SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 63 O.S. 2011, Section 1-730, is
12 amended to read as follows:

13 Section 1-730. A. As used in this article:

14 1. "Abortion" means the use or prescription of any instrument,
15 medicine, drug, or any other substance or device intentionally to
16 terminate the pregnancy of a female known to be pregnant with an
17 intention other than to increase the probability of a live birth, to
18 preserve the life or health of the child after live birth, to remove
19 an ectopic pregnancy, or to remove a dead unborn child who died as
20 the result of a spontaneous miscarriage, accidental trauma, or a
21 criminal assault on the pregnant female or her unborn child;

22 2. "Attempt to perform an abortion" means an act, or an
23 omission of a statutorily required act, that under the circumstances
24 as the actor believes them to be constitutes a substantial step in a

1 course of conduct planned to culminate in the performance of an
2 abortion;

3 3. "Certified technician" means a Registered Diagnostic Medical
4 Sonographer who is certified in obstetrics and gynecology by the
5 American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS) or a
6 Nurse Midwife or Advance Practice Nurse Practitioner in Obstetrics
7 with certification in obstetrical ultrasonography;

8 4. "Unborn child" or "unborn person" means the unborn offspring
9 of human beings from the moment of conception, through pregnancy,
10 and until live birth including the human conceptus, zygote, morula,
11 blastocyst, embryo and fetus;

12 5. "Unemancipated minor" means any person less than eighteen
13 (18) years of age who is not or has not been married or who is under
14 the care, custody, and control of the person's parent or parents,
15 guardian, or juvenile court of competent jurisdiction;

16 6. "Viable" means potentially able to live outside of the womb
17 of the mother upon premature birth, whether resulting from natural
18 causes or an abortion;

19 7. "Conception" means the fertilization of the ovum of a female
20 individual by the sperm of a male individual;

21 8. "Health" means physical or mental health;

22 9. "Department" means the State Department of Health; and

23 10. "Inducing an abortion" means the administration by any
24 person, including the pregnant woman, of any substance designed or

1 intended to cause an expulsion of the unborn child, effecting an
2 abortion as defined above.

3 B. Nothing contained herein shall be construed in any manner to
4 include any ~~birth control~~ contraceptive device or medication or
5 sterilization procedure.

6 SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be
7 codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

8 If some or all of the provisions of Section 2 or 3 of this act
9 are ever temporarily or permanently restrained or enjoined by court
10 order, the remaining provisions of such section shall be enforced as
11 though the restrained or enjoined provisions had not been adopted;
12 provided, however, if such temporary or permanent restraining order
13 or injunction is stayed or dissolved, or otherwise ceases to have
14 effect, such provisions shall have full force and effect.

15 SECTION 5. This act shall become effective November 1, 2020.

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