

Susan B. Anthony  
Pro-Life America  
Messaging Guidance for  
Candidates  
2023

I assume that since you are holding this manual in your hands (or reading it on your computer screen) that you are pro-life.

You may be pro-life because of your religious beliefs. You may be pro-life because your moral ethic finds abortion abhorrent. You may be pro-life because you understand the beauty and promise in every child. You may be swayed by legal reasoning or logic. There are all kinds of reasons to be pro-life.

But this manual is not about feelings or personal beliefs. It's about politics. The underlying theme of this manual is that the pro-life cause is not only right, it's good politics too.

In the next 50 pages we hope to demonstrate that you can win with the Life issue. We want to help train you for the battle ahead and give you the tools to fight the good fight against abortion. Not just to fight, but to win.

Your heart may be pure and your cause just, but that's not enough. As the proverb goes, providence is on the side of the big battalions. The reality of this fallen world is that elections have consequences, and we can't stop abortion in America unless we win.

Pro-life candidates can win, and have done so, at all levels of government. But we need more. More governors, more legislators, more judges, more school board members.

As Martin Luther King said, "The arc of the moral universe is long but it bends towards justice." I know that what we do is right, and that saving the lives of millions of unborn souls is worth the sacrifice. I also know it will not be easy and it will not be quick. In our fight to save unborn lives there are few permanent victories. Each election year we have to dig in again and fight for every inch.

The good news is that we know how to win. We've done it before and we will do it again. We've tried to distill what we've learned here in the SBA List Pro-Life Manual.

We want **you** to win too. Please read this manual. Learn its lessons. Save lives.

## Chapter I

### Discovering what Americans think about abortion

For decades, our opponents and the mainstream media have tried to paint a picture of a nation that favors abortion on-demand, where pro-life sentiments are in the minority. **That's not true, and we can prove it.**

This chapter uses polling data to set the record straight and to present a clearer picture of public opinion on abortion.

Polling has come under a lot of criticism in recent years—some of it deserved. Bias can slip into polling in many ways, including the order in which questions are asked, how questions are worded, and the interpretation—or misinterpretation—of the data. However, survey research is still the best tool we have when it comes to understanding public opinion. For this reason, institutions, corporate America, and political campaigns are now polling more than ever before.

Every state, Congressional district, and state legislative district is different, and what is true in one district may not be true in another. Polls are conducted over the course of a few days, and only represent public opinion at the point in time they are taken. As situations change, so does public opinion.

In surveying recent polling on abortion, here are the most important findings:

#### A majority of Americans...

1. Consider a candidate's **position on abortion** an **important factor** in their voting decision (page x)
2. **Oppose unrestricted abortion** on demand (page x)
3. **Oppose late-term abortions** (page x)
4. **Oppose aborting Down Syndrome** children solely based on disability (page x)
5. Do **not support taxpayer funding** of abortion (page x)
6. Support requiring **ultrasounds** before abortions (page x)
7. Have **conflicting views** about *Roe v. Wade* (page x)
8. Prefer that their **elected representatives** decide abortion policy rather than the courts (page x)
9. **Support parental consent** and parental notification before a minor may obtain an abortion (page x)

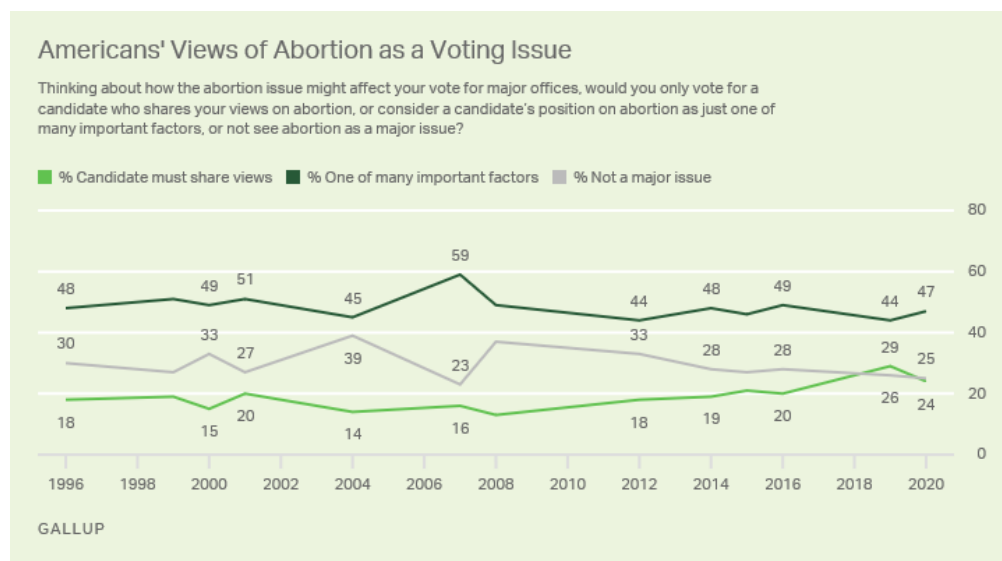
Polls also find that:

1. **Pro-life** voters **care more** about the abortion issue than pro-choice voters (page V)
2. Roughly **half** of American voters **self-identify** as “**pro-life**” (page G)
3. A **significant percentage** of **Democrats** believe in some **restrictions** on abortion (page x)
4. **Women**, as a group, are only **slightly more pro-choice** than men (page x)

In the following pages, we will prove these findings by showcasing a variety of polls and statistics from highly acclaimed polling companies. We hope you find these useful in your efforts to defend your pro-life stance.

**FINDING: A majority of Americans consider a candidate’s position on abortion an important factor in their voting decision**

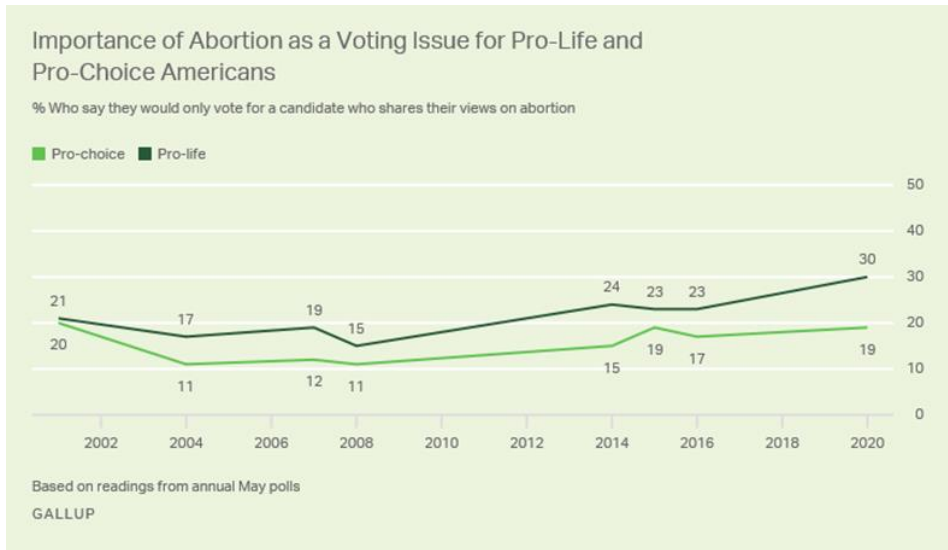
For many Americans, while abortion may not be the most important issue driving their vote, 71% (according to a **2020 Gallup poll**) say they **consider abortion to some degree** when deciding which candidates to support for major public offices.



The same poll showed that one in four Americans consider abortion to be a **key voting issue** for major offices. The poll results showed that 24% of voters will only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion (pro-life *or* pro-choice). An additional 47% say they consider abortion to be one of many important factors affecting their vote. Only 25% said abortion was not a major issue.

**FINDING: PRO-LIFE VOTERS care MORE ABOUT THE ISSUE OF ABORTION THAN PRO-CHOICE VOTERS**

Gallup’s 2020 poll also answered the question of whether pro-life or pro-choice voters care more about the issue of abortion. The poll found that 30% of pro-life Americans say they would only vote for a candidate who shares their views on abortion, compared to only 19% of pro-choice Americans.



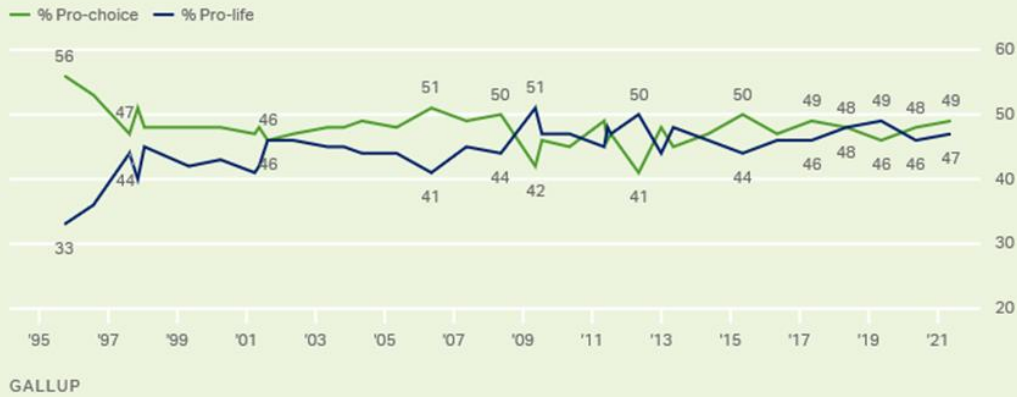
A 2020 Marist Poll showed similar findings. Asking a representative survey of Americans “*Is a politician’s position on abortion a major factor, a minor factor, or not a factor in deciding your vote for president?*” the poll found that 45% of pro-life Americans consider abortion a major factor in their vote, compared to only 35% of pro-choice Americans.

**FINDING: Roughly half of AMERICANS IDENTIFY AS “PRO-LIFE”**

Despite what the abortion industry and the media proclaim, the nation is pretty evenly divided between those who call themselves pro-life and those who identify as pro-choice. Though the numbers vary from year to year, Americans who identify as pro-choice and pro-life are at rough parity. **Gallup** first asked Americans to identify themselves as pro-choice or pro-life on abortion in 1995, when there was a marked pro-choice advantage. The chart below shows that over the last decade, 49% of Americans on average have identified as pro-choice and 47% have identified as pro-life.

With respect to the abortion issue, would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life?

Trend from polls where pro-life/pro-choice was asked after question on legality of abortion

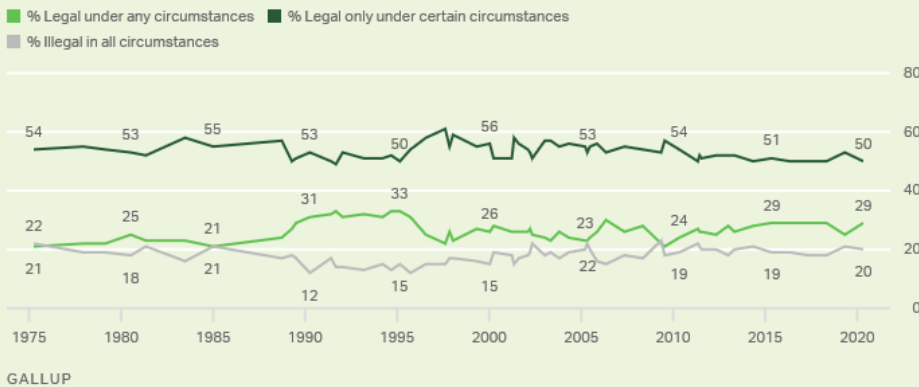


**FINDING: A MAJORITY OF AMERICANS OPPOSE unrestricted ABORTION ON DEMAND**

It's true. A majority of Americans think there ought to be limits on the availability of abortion. Over the last decade, Gallup polling has consistently shown that at least half of all Americans believe that abortion should be legal *only under certain circumstances*. Gallup found that 20% of Americans believe that abortion should be illegal in all circumstances, and 50% believe it should be legal only under certain circumstances. The June 2020 **Gallup** poll asked Americans if abortion should be (1) legal in all circumstances, (2) legal only under certain circumstances, or (3) illegal in all circumstances.

Americans' Preference for the Legality of Abortion

Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances or illegal in all circumstances?



A January 2021 Marist Poll was more specific when polling Americans on their positions. Marist asked Americans which of the following statements came closest to their opinion on abortion:

	Americans		Pro-Life		Pro-Choice
Available to a woman any time during her entire pregnancy	15%		1%		27%
Only during the first six months of pregnancy	10%		2%		17%
Only during the first three months of pregnancy	25%	} 76%	14%	} 98%	35%
Only in cases of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother	28%		40%		16%
Only to save the life of the mother	11%		21%		2%
Should never be permitted under any circumstance	12%		23%		2%
					} 55%

Combining the four categories that favor significant restrictions, we see that 76% of all Americans favor restrictions on abortion, including 55% of those who identify as pro-choice! Only 15% of Americans say abortion should be available to a woman at any time during her pregnancy, and since Democrats in Congress oppose any restrictions on abortion, it seems that they are out of step with *85% of the American public*.

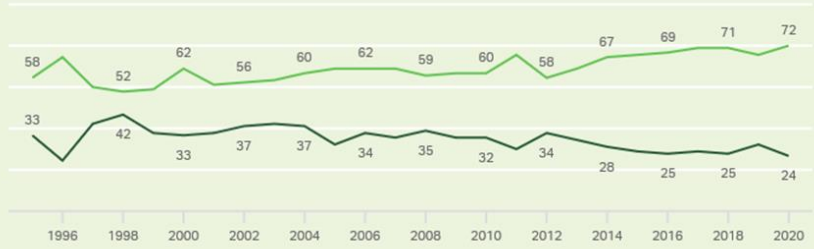
**FINDING: A Significant percentage of Democrats BELIEVE IN SOME RESTRICTIONS ON ABORTION**

The typical assumption is that Republicans are pro-life and Democrats are pro-choice. Most of the time this assumption is correct, but not all the time. A handful of Republicans are pro-choice, and a larger number of self-identified Democrats self-identify as pro-life.

### Democrats' Self-ID on Abortion

With respect to the abortion issue, would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life?

■ % Pro-choice ■ % Pro-life



\*Mixed,\* \*Neither,\* and No opinion\* not shown

GALLUP

### Americans' Self-Identified Position on Abortion, 2021

With respect to the abortion issue, would you consider yourself to be pro-choice or pro-life?

	"Pro-choice"	"Pro-life"	No opinion <sup>^</sup>	Number of interviews
	%	%	%	n
U.S. adults	49	47	5	1,016
<b>Party ID</b>				
Republican	22	74	4	317
Independent	53	41	6	348
Democratic	70	26	4	322

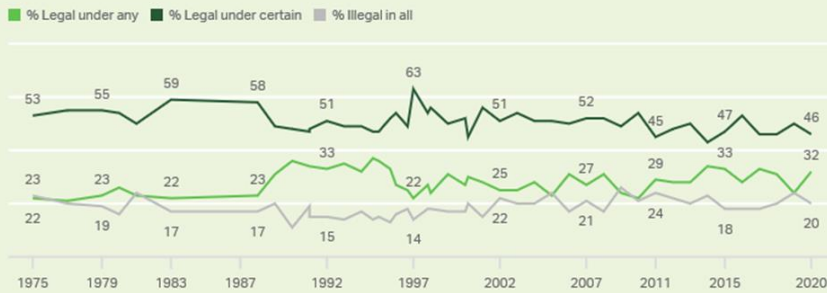
### **FINDING: women are not Significantly more Pro-choice than men**

Far too many Democrats and pro-choice politicians assume that all women are pro-choice, and that's simply not true. Women are *only slightly* more likely than men to support abortion, and a majority of women either favor restrictions or an absolute ban. As you would expect, single women are more pro-choice and married men and women are more pro-life.



### Women's Views on Legality of Abortion, 1975-2020

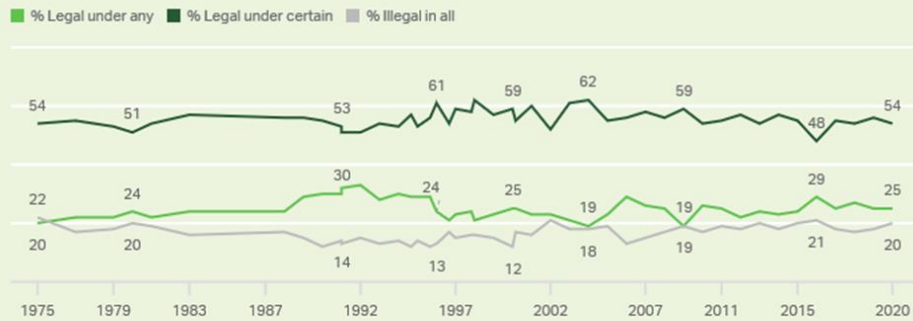
Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances or illegal in all circumstances?



GALLUP

### Men's Views on Legality of Abortion, 1975-2020

Do you think abortions should be legal under any circumstances, legal only under certain circumstances, or illegal in all circumstances?

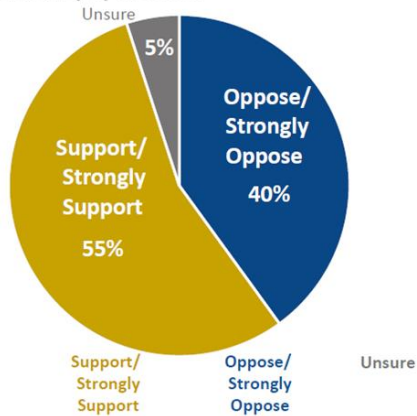


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## **FINDING: MOST AMERICANS OPPOSE LATE-TERM ABORTIONS**

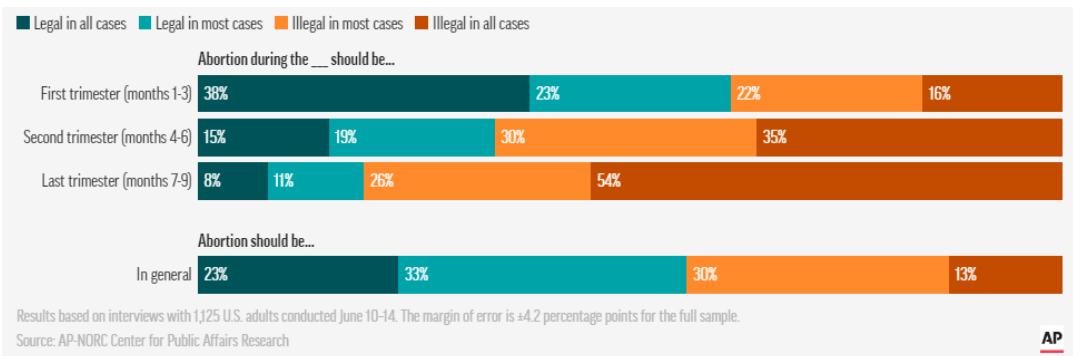
A 2020 Marist Poll found that 55% of Americans support banning abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, except to save the life of the mother. This includes 45% of those deemed "pro-choice," 45% of Democrats, and 55% of Independents.

Please tell me if you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose banning abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy except to save the life of the mother.



	Support/Strongly Support	Oppose/Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Pro-Life	69%	26%	5%
Pro-Choice	45%	52%	4%
Democrat	43%	52%	5%
Republican	64%	32%	4%
Independent	55%	38%	7%

A 2021 AP-NORC poll found that 65% of Americans believe that abortion should be illegal in all or most cases in the second trimester. In addition, a whopping 80% of Americans believe abortion should be illegal in most or all cases in the last trimester, with over half saying it should be **illegal in all cases** at that point.



A more recent poll commissioned by the SBA List (On Message Inc. 2021) concluded that 55% of Americans are more likely to support a proposed 15-week limit if they know that by 15 weeks, an unborn child has the capacity to feel pain.

Knowing the following, are you more or less likely to support the proposed 15 week limit?

By 15 weeks, an unborn child has the capacity to feel pain.

	Total	DEM	IND	GOP
More Likely	55%	35%	48%	80%
Less Likely	26%	40%	26%	11%

By 15 weeks an unborn child has a beating heart, can move around in the womb, can close his or her fingers, can start to make sucking motions and hiccup, and senses stimulation from outside the womb.

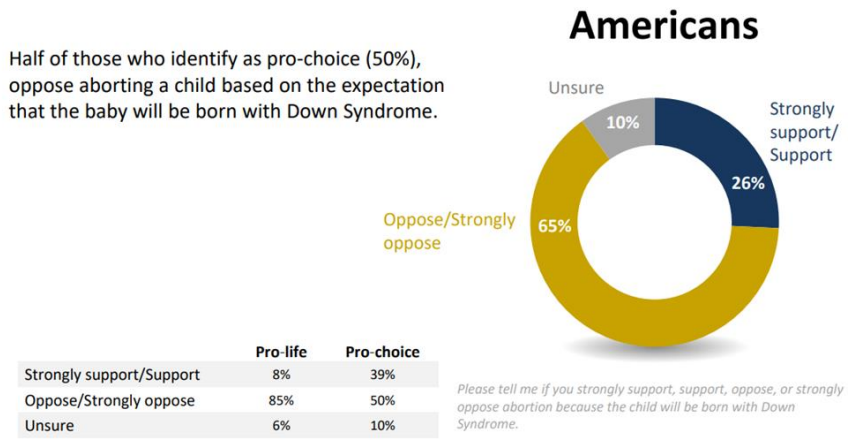
	Total	DEM	IND	GOP
More Likely	53%	34%	48%	76%
Less Likely	27%	40%	28%	16%

Abortion carries significant physical and psychological risks to the mother, and these risks increase with late abortions.

	Total	DEM	IND	GOP
More Likely	52%	35%	46%	73%
Less Likely	29%	42%	29%	15%

**FINDING: MOST AMERICANS Oppose aborting Down Syndrome children solely based on disability**

Polling conducted by Marist in 2020 found that 65% of Americans oppose or strongly oppose aborting a child based on the expectation that the baby will be born with Down Syndrome, including 50% of those who identify as pro-choice.

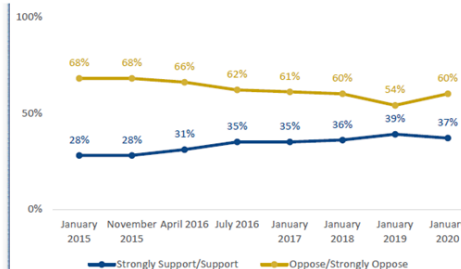
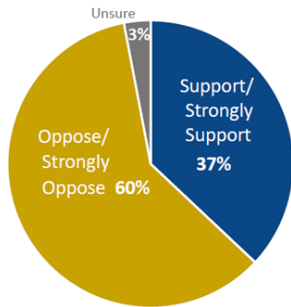


**FINDING: AMERICANS DO NOT support taxpayer funding of abortion**

A January 2020 Marist Poll reveals that 60% of Americans say they oppose or strongly oppose using tax dollars to pay for abortions. This includes 37% of those who identified as "pro-choice," 35% of Democrats, and 55% of Independents. The same poll found that

76% of Americans oppose using tax dollars to fund abortions in other countries, including 61% of those who identified as "pro-choice." This may seem shocking considering in 2021, every Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives voted against efforts to limit U.S. funding of abortion overseas.

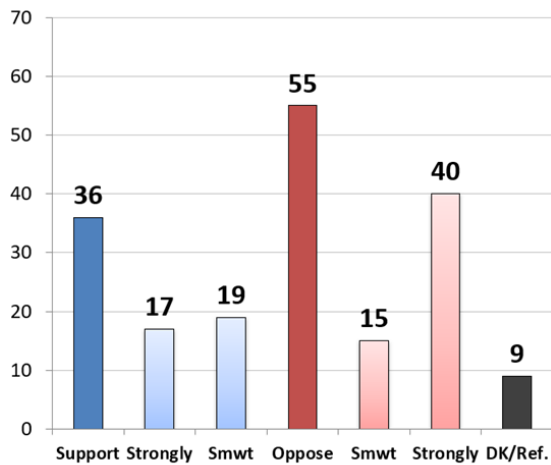
Please tell me if you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose using tax dollars to pay for a woman's abortion.



A majority of independents (42%) and a notable proportion of Democrats (35%) oppose tax payer funding of abortion.

Most Americans also do not support funding abortions through Medicaid. A poll conducted in 2019 by McLaughlin & Associates found that 55% of voters—including 35% of Democrats and 57% of Independents—oppose using federal tax dollars to pay for abortions under Medicaid (40% strongly oppose).

Put simply, Americans do not think taxpayer money should be used to pay for abortion.



National - SBA List  
June 2019

McLaughlin & Associates

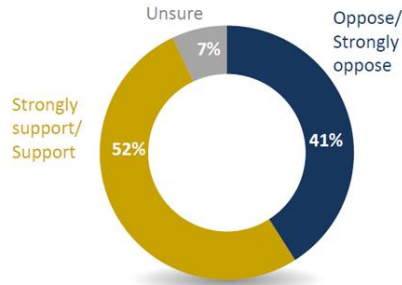
**FINDING: AMERICANS SUPPORT laws requiring ultrasounds BEFORE ABORTIONS**

A 2011 Gallup Poll found that 50% of Americans supported a law requiring women seeking abortions to be shown an ultrasound image at least 24 hours before the

procedure. Support for ultrasound appears to have increased since then. A 2020 Marist Poll found that 52% of Americans support or strongly support requiring a woman to have an ultrasound at least 24 hours before an abortion procedure— including 38% of those identified as pro-choice.

Nearly four in ten of those who identify as pro-choice (38%), support an ultrasound at least 24 hours before an abortion procedure.

### Americans



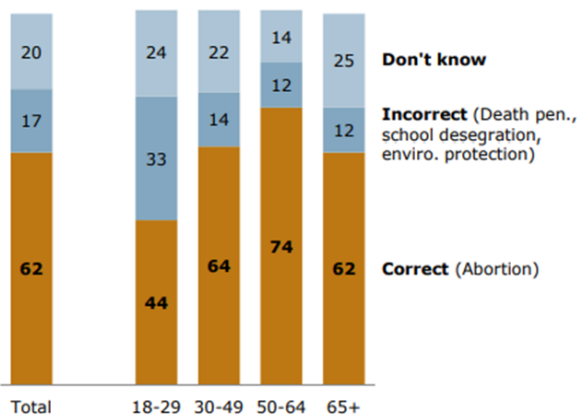
	Pro-life	Pro-choice
Strongly support/Support	72%	38%
Oppose/Strongly oppose	20%	57%
Unsure	8%	5%

Please tell me if you strongly support, support, oppose, or strongly oppose requiring a woman to have an ultrasound at least 24 hours before the procedure.

### **FINDING: Americans are confused and conflicted about *Roe v. Wade***

Polling appears to show a plurality of Americans are opposed to overturning *Roe v. Wade*. At the same time, polling also shows that Americans support limits on abortion, don't support taxpayer funding of abortions and overwhelmingly oppose late term abortion on demand, which is what *Roe v. Wade* allows. As the chart below shows, there is a lot of confusion about the *Roe v. Wade* decision.

The Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* dealt with which of the following issues?



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Jan. 9-13, 2013.

Americans do think that abortion is important enough to merit the Supreme Court's attention. An Ipsos poll from June 2020 found that 60% of Americans believe that the

Supreme Court should hear abortion cases, including a majority Democrats (53%), Republicans (64%), and Independents (66%).

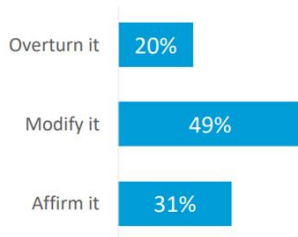
**INFO SCREEN:** There are a number of court cases about abortion laws that have been submitted to the Supreme Court including some that could potentially uphold or overturn the legal right to abortion established by *Roe v. Wade*.

5. Should the Supreme Court hear these cases on abortion or should they not hear these cases and allow existing laws to continue as they are?

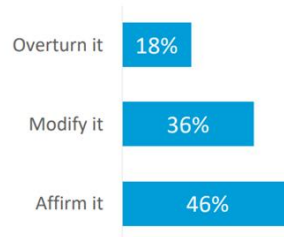
	Total	9 States	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Supreme Court should hear abortion cases	60%	63%	53%	64%	66%
Supreme Court should not hear abortion cases	40%	37%	47%	36%	34%

And finally, though a minority of Americans want *Roe* overturned outright, a majority think modifications are in order. A Harvard Caps Poll from 2019 found that 54% of Americans think that the Supreme Court should overturn or modify *Roe v. Wade*.

Do you think the Supreme Court is going to overturn *Roe vs Wade*, modify it or affirm it?

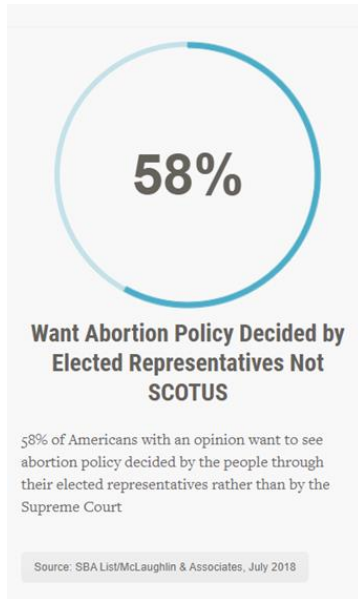


Do you think the Supreme Court should overturn *Roe vs Wade*, modify it or affirm it?



**FINDING: MOST AMERICANS Prefer that their elected representatives decide abortion policy rather than the courts**

A 2018 poll conducted by McLaughlin & Associates found that 58% of Americans who had an opinion wanted to see abortion policy decided by the people through their elected representatives rather than by the Supreme Court.



### **FINDING: AMERICANS ARE IN FAVOR OF PARENTAL CONSENT AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION**

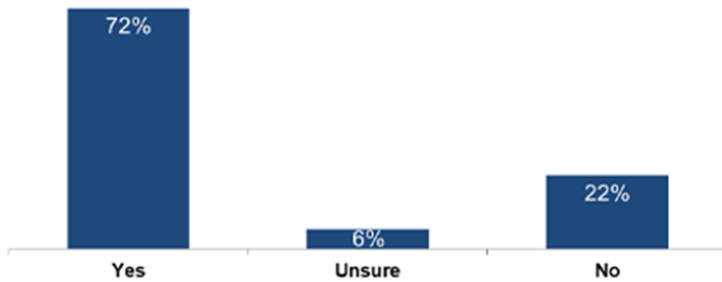
We don't have any recent nationwide polling on this issue, but polling conducted in Massachusetts, Florida, and Illinois clearly shows strong support for parental consent.

The Tarrance Group polled Massachusetts voters in May 2019 and determined that a supermajority **(62%) of voters support the existing law that require permission from a parent before a minor can get an abortion.**

In polling conducted in April 2019, the Tarrance Group also found that nearly 3/4ths of Florida voters **(73%) support legislation that would require parental consent before a minor could get an abortion.** (That includes 60% of Democrats!)

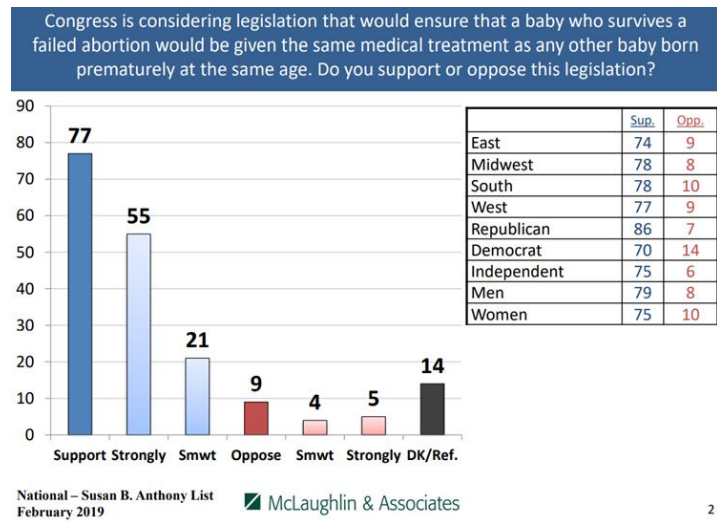
A 2021 Tarrance Group poll in Illinois found that **almost three-quarters** [of Illinoisans] are opposed to repealing the Parental Notice Law. According to those polled, **72%** of overall respondents support the current parental notification requirement.

If a minor under age 18 is seeking an abortion, do you think the law should require her parent or guardian to be notified before the procedure?



**FINDING: Americans support born-alive legislation**

A 2019 McLaughlin poll shows that the vast majority of Americans think that a baby who survives an abortion deserves to receive the same medical treatment as a baby born prematurely at the same age. The reality is that if such babies do not receive necessary care, they are either killed (infanticide) or left to die. The bars in the graph represent the averages across the different categories.



**SUMMATION**

Life is a winning issue. While the public appears to be evenly divided between pro-life and pro-choice sentiments, pro-life candidates can successfully campaign on issues like parental consent, taxpayer funding, limiting late-term abortions and born-alive legislation. Our opponents have shown almost no flexibility on those issues, and they are



on the wrong side. They are the real extremists, and we need to make sure the voter knows that. The American public is with us!

## CHAPTER II

### CRAFTING YOUR STATEMENT ON LIFE

During a political campaign you will be asked your opinion on the Life issue. You can't avoid this. Even if you are running for county treasurer, someone will ask you your opinion on abortion and they will expect an answer.

Abortion is not only an issue packed with emotion and real life-or-death consequences, it is also for many a litmus test that allows them to determine which team you are playing for: the good guys or the bad guys. With so much riding on the issue, it behooves you to think through just what your position is and how best to articulate it.

Susan B. Anthony List believes there is plenty of room in the pro-life movement for differences of opinion as long as the end goal is to end the destruction of innocent unborn lives.

Here are the three pro-life positions most commonly held by politicians in the US.

#### **1. Abortion is always wrong and should be illegal**

This position is certainly the most consistent and intellectually coherent. Abortion is always wrong because abortion kills a human being. Period.

#### **2. Abortion is wrong and should be illegal except in cases of a threat to the life of the mother.**

This position holds to the sanctity of human life but makes allowances for those very few instances where the mother's life is at risk due to the pregnancy.

No exceptions are made for incest or rape because all children, born and unborn, have the same right to life. America doesn't execute small children because their parents were closely related, nor do we kill newborns because the mother was raped.

### **3. Abortion is wrong and should be illegal except in cases of rape, incest or threat to the life of the mother.**

This position holds to the sanctity of human life but makes allowances for instances in which the mother's life is at risk, in addition to exceptions for rape and incest.

No matter what your pro-life stance, you must be prepared for the same attacks. Whatever your position, your opponents will still cry that you care nothing for the mother, that you want to return to the bad old days of back-alley abortionists, that you don't think women can do what they want with their own bodies, and that you think it's fine to force young women to bring unwanted children into the world to be abused.

#### **Turn your position into a statement**

We suggest crafting a statement that reflects your position on Life before you talk to that reporter or are asked to explain your position to the Rotary Club.

There are at least four good reasons to draft a statement in advance.

#### **1. To help you define your position to your own satisfaction**

The best reason for writing a statement about the abortion issue is that doing so will help clarify your position.

What do you mean when you call yourself pro-life? To some, it means a disposition against abortion and a passion to protect the unborn or an iron opposition to abortion for any reason. To others it is a position in opposition to the zealots on the left who are tearing down the bonds that hold society together.

Writing your statement will force you to choose language that best represents your thoughts and feelings. It may even lead you to modify your position. Many of us have never had the time, or inclination, to sit down and try to define exactly how we feel...and fewer have been forced to put our thoughts on paper.

Where do you draw the line? Is abortion always wrong? Are you comfortable with exceptions for the life of the mother? Have you given enough thought to alternatives like adoption? These are questions you need to wrestle with

and find your answers.

## **2. To prevent yourself from making a mistake**

When you announce your intention to seek office, and sometimes even before, reporters will ask your opinion on the abortion issue. If you know what you want to say, you are much more likely to be quoted correctly.

This seems obvious, but even veteran public speakers can fall down when unprepared. When asked about his support of the Iraq War during the presidential race of 2004, John Kerry, an experienced two-term US Senator, famously declared that he “voted for the war before he voted against it.” Overnight Kerry became the poster boy for vacillating politicians everywhere.

Prudence dictates that you prepare what you are going to say about a thorny issue before you say it.

## **3. Because you want people to understand you**

As a candidate, what you say is important and you are not supposed to make mistakes (okay, Joe Biden gets a pass, but nobody else does). In your previous endeavors you have probably been a leader in your community and people have looked to you for leadership. Now, as a candidate for office, your job description includes speaking for others as well as providing leadership.

It is no longer enough simply to say you are pro-life because that phrase means many things to many people. Many whom you would not consider on your side of the issue call themselves pro-life. Likewise, many Americans who call themselves pro-choice stand with you on many abortion related issues.

To those on the left, announcing that you are pro-life means you are against women, believe men should rule the world, always vote Republican, are probably a rigid Catholic, are intolerant of women’s rights, and that you buy into the idea that all women should be barefoot and pregnant. Sound silly? Sure it does. But because of the political struggle that has been waged over abortion since *Roe v. Wade*, the terms “pro-life” and “pro-choice” carry a lot of baggage, not to mention media typecasting.

People assume that when you label yourself pro-life, you hold issue positions they think pro-life people hold, for good or bad. You inherit whatever

prejudices they bring to the phrase, whether deserved or not. The terms pro-life and pro-choice have become political shorthand for a broad attitude about abortion and other social issues that may or may not fit you. Sometimes that is to your advantage; sometimes not. That's why it's important to craft a statement.

#### **4. So you can be consistent**

Possibly the worst thing you can do is changing your position on the abortion issue in the middle of a campaign. Without preparation and practice too many of us will over-explain our position on the issue of abortion using different words each time we speak. That's human nature. We are always searching for the best way to say things and we also use variation to keep ourselves amused.

In ordinary conversation, such variation adds spice to our daily discourse. But in politics, a change in the words you use to talk about abortion may be seen as a change in your position on the issue, and it could come back to haunt you.

A candidate for attorney general (we'll call him Dick) in a southern state issued an abortion statement at the beginning of the campaign opposing abortion under any circumstances once the fetus has reached viability. In the next two months Dick had to answer question after question about how he defined viability. In order to make his position clear, Dick re-wrote his statement to say that viability was achieved at the end of the first 6 months, or second trimester. His opponent then blasted him for changing his position. Dick didn't change, but the words he chose to define his position did, and many people agreed with his opponent and voted against Dick. Dick lost.

#### **Here are some rules to follow when writing your statement**

Your task is to craft a statement about abortion that is true, unequivocal, not subject to much misinterpretation and politically palatable. This isn't easy. Here are some rules that may help.

### **1 Be consistent**

Your statement should be consistent with any previous public statements you have made. This is not always possible, particularly if your views have

evolved over the years (many people have grown on this issue as they have learned more), but you should attempt to be as consistent as possible.

## **2 Keep it short**

Keep your statement relatively short so that most people can comprehend what you are trying to say. Extra verbiage almost never helps make your position clearer. Where most candidates get themselves in trouble is when they try to over-explain.

Even more important, the average media sound bite is less than 10 seconds long. If you state your position in a five-minute harangue, reporters will cut your statement down to size, and **they** get to pick which part the public hears. If you keep your statement short, **you** get to decide what the public hears.

## **3 Make it positive**

Make your statement as positive and as upbeat as possible. Even though your statement is about your opposition to abortion, you don't have to come across as negative. A positive, upbeat attitude will win more support than a fierce, disapproving demeanor.

A good example is the change wrought by some very smart people who decided thirty years ago to change "anti-abortion" to "pro-life" to describe our position. Both phrases mean basically the same thing, but "pro-life" states the position positively and is harder for your opponents to argue with (after all, who is willing to say they are pro-death?).

## **4 Discuss the issue in your terms**

In war, the successful general often wins the battle by choosing the battlefield upon which his troops will fight. To win the war of words on the abortion issue, you must define the issue in terms that lead people to agree with you. Do not adopt the flawed assumptions of the pro-abortion forces.

For instance, we want to talk in terms of the right of every child to live rather than using the pro-abortion language about a woman's right to choose what to do with her body. We focus on the availability of elective abortion-on-demand in America, rather than getting distracted by the minuscule percentage of "hard luck" cases for rape and incest. We talk about the joy of a new baby rather than

buying into the idea that a teenager with an unplanned pregnancy has ruined her life. We don't pit the baby against the mom – instead, our message is that we value the lives of both the baby and the mom.

Yes, you may have to, or want to, address these facets of the abortion debate, but nothing requires you to lead with your chin and use your opponent's rhetoric.

## **5 Use values language, not just statistics**

Statistics have their place, but most effective political speaking involves emotion. For example, partial birth abortions represented a very small percentage of abortions in America, but because the procedure is so barbaric, the debate over the Partial Birth Abortion Ban stirred up emotions in people who were otherwise unaffected by the topic of abortion. Even pro-abortion Democrat Joe Biden could not bring himself to vote in the Senate against banning what looks and feels like infanticide.

It's important to appeal to people by speaking to the values that underlie most Americans' issue positions. The voters will vote for someone who cares about the things they care about.

Common sense tells you what most Americans care about, because they are the same things you care about: safety, a good education for your kids, financial security, a good job, a secure retirement, good health, fun vacations, and close family relationships, to name a few.

To connect to these values effectively, you may need to change the way you use language. If you're a professional person such as a lawyer, doctor or business owner, you speak and write in the language of your profession. In political communication, you should speak the language of values.

To appeal to the emotions and self-interest of the voters, you must explain your issue positions in terms of where people live. Your plan to help drug addicts means more children saved and safer neighborhoods. You support a tax cut so that more families can afford a home of their own. You oppose efforts to cut funding for police forces because you are concerned about the safety of our families.

When discussing the abortion issue, what values should you appeal to?

How about the health of the mother and the life of her unborn baby, the joys of family, and the safety of young women put at risk by the profit-driven abortion industry?

If you don't think values rhetoric is effective, take a gander at how the pro-abortion forces use values. They define the abortion issue in terms of threat to the life of the mother (**health**), the return to the bad old days of back-alley abortionists (**health and safety**), the costs of unwanted children (**financial security, saving for retirement**) and the problems faced by single mothers (**financial security, education, good jobs, etc.**).

## 6 Bolster your arguments with facts

Don't rely on statistics and numbers *alone* to make your arguments, but don't neglect them either. Hard facts can be convincing and lift your statements out of the realm of opinion into the world of the real.

It is a fact that the US has more lenient abortion laws than 42 European countries. It is a fact that the US is one of only seven countries that allow late term abortions. It is a fact that according to the Guttmacher Institute, nearly half of abortions in the US are repeat abortions. It is a fact that chemical abortions lead to a 500% increase in ER visits.

These facts strengthen our case and are usually news to your audience. The science is on our side, and your audience needs to hear that too.

### Sample Statements

Susan B. Anthony List will not try to put words in your mouth, but you may find one of these statements a match for your sentiments.

Here's a statement which emphasizes opposition to abortion in terms of saving lives while at the same time caring for the mother:

***“I'm pro-life. My position has always been that innocent unborn children are entitled to their lives protected by the law. As your state Senator, I would advocate those laws that will save as many lives as possible while providing for the needs of the mother. We must find a way to balance the rights of both.”***



Here's a statement that draws an interesting parallel with environmental laws:

***“I feel in my heart that we should uphold the value of human life from its very beginning. It’s illogical to argue that we can destroy an innocent human being at seven or twelve weeks, but not at 38 weeks. In fact, it’s a crime to destroy a bald eagle either before or after it hatches. Human beings should be given the same protection.”***

How about this one?

***“My position is one that will always err on the side of life. The fact that 50% of all abortions are repeat abortions tells me that abortion is an empty promise – it doesn’t solve any problems. Instead, multiple abortions just expose women to health risks. We must work to create a positive atmosphere of support and acceptance for women facing a difficult pregnancy and work to produce a society where the value of all human life is held in high regard.”***

Here's a very soft statement:

***“I’m pro-life and I’m pro-woman. In America we pride ourselves on striving to achieve the best. The answer to the abortion debate is to provide positive solutions that will eliminate the need for abortion, such as support for women and families, adoption, good prenatal care, pregnancy prevention programs, and education for teens.”***

This one's a little tougher:

***“I am opposed to abortion. I believe it’s wrong to take life, so we must give the unborn child the benefit of the doubt. I know that young single mothers face difficult choices, which is why I am committed to working to create alternatives such as prenatal care and pregnancy support, adoption aid, and counseling.”***

Here is a statement which emphasizes the civil rights of the unborn:

***“Anyone with a knowledge of genetics, and even those without, agree that the unborn child is a human being. If we can hear the heart beating at three weeks, measure brain waves at six weeks, and perform surgery on a***

*child in the womb, certainly the law can protect the child while at the same time caring for the mother's physical and emotional needs."*

Here's a simple statement based on religion:

*"I am opposed to abortion. My faith, and my understanding of God's commandments, lead me to this position. The Bible teaches that all life is sacred and must be protected. The Bible also teaches us to love one another. We travel different paths, and we disagree on this issue, but we are all God's children. Let us see where we can agree."*

Here's one that attempts to deflect the debate away from the pro-life, pro-choice dichotomy and towards a debate about limitations (which our polling shows most people favor):

*"The real question here is not whether I or my opponent is pro-choice or pro-life. The reality is that in America today, abortions are legal for all 9 months of pregnancy...but the courts have also said that reasonable restrictions are permitted."*

*"My opponent is an extremist on this issue. She would allow abortions for any reason, any time, any place. She supports government funding, so you and I must pay for abortions even if we are morally opposed to them. She opposes a 24-hour waiting period so the mother has time to think through what she's doing. My opponent doesn't think you have the right to even be informed if your 14-year-old daughter is going to have an abortion. She doesn't even oppose late-term abortions, when the baby can feel the terrible pain of abortion. Americans support sensible restrictions on abortion, but my opponent is too radical to support even common-sense restrictions such as these."*

Here is a statement made by Marjorie Dannenfelser, President of the Susan B. Anthony List:

*"In a word, Roe has proved to be a vehicle for hopelessness for women in need. To the hundreds of thousands of lonely and desperate women facing unplanned pregnancies and looking for help, the modern women's movement says, 'You are not up to this challenge because it is bigger than you. You do not have the courage and resolve it takes to let your child be adopted. You don't have the inner strength it takes to handle the peer pressure and long looks from so-called friends. You don't have the ability to repair the broken*

*relationships that might have led to this crisis. You don't have the generosity it takes to sacrifice. You are small -- give up!*

*"I reject the radical-feminist idea that women are second-class humans who lack the inner strength & courage to stand up for human life. I believe that American women -- all created with the desire to protect and love their unborn children written on their hearts -- have the capacity to be strong and courageous and generous.*

*"It is time that the better nature of American women be exemplified in new, authentic heroines: women who confidently affirm the best in women and who proclaim the natural bond between mother and unborn child, who believe in women and will truly help them when they are in need."*

Here's one last combative statement:

*"Sure, I oppose abortion. Here's what 50 years of legalized abortion has done for America: more out-of-wedlock pregnancies, increased incidence of child abuse, injury and sterility, depression, grief and suicide, diminished respect for motherhood with mothers and their unborn children pitted against each other, and a decline in the moral underpinning of society. If this is successful public policy, I would like to see what failure looks like!"*

## **Conclusion**

The important thing is that you have a position on abortion, that you understand your position, and that you can state your position clearly and in a consistent manner. In the best of all possible worlds, your position will sound strong and positive, and will not be open to misinterpretation.

## CHAPTER III

### WINNING THE ABORTION DEBATE

In most political campaigns, abortion will not be the one issue that decides who will win and who will lose the election. As noted before, most voters do not make their voting decision solely on the abortion issue. But it can be the issue that sinks your campaign if you let standing for life be defined as extreme, when the extreme position is allowing abortion on-demand until birth paid for by taxpayers.

Abortion *is* an important issue with many voters, and you must be prepared to advocate for the unborn and hold your own against attacks from pro-abortion advocates in the media and among your opponents. The abortion issue will likely come up in debate or public forums. People you meet will ask you for your opinion on abortion. Reporters will grill you on the subject. Preparation can win you votes; lack of preparation can cost you.

Your job is to win the abortion debate. Not winning in the sense of scoring debating points (although that's nice too) but winning the hearts and minds of the voters to your candidacy.

#### Five key points to remember:

- 1. Talk to your voters and those that are persuadable. Don't try to win the hearts and minds of those who oppose you.**

You can't win all the voters all the time. Trying to win every vote is like trying to teach a pig to sing -- it won't work and it will annoy the pig. When you speak, speak to your coalition. Don't pander to the audience, pander to your coalition -- the people who will vote for you. Sometimes you will even want to pick a fight with your opponent's coalition as a means of firming up your own side.

A political campaign is not a crusade to change the world and you lack the time and resources to engage in that sort of thing. Instead, try to ensure that voters who agree with your position know where you stand, and work at winning over voters who you can persuade to vote for you. The amount of time and resources it takes to change the hearts and minds of pro-abortion liberals is simply beyond your grasp.

Just make sure you have defined a coalition big enough to get you elected.

- 2. You cannot make a good argument or give a good response to your opponent's attack unless you recognize the assumptions underlying your**

## **opponent's positions**

Recognize the assumptions underlying your opponent's (and your) positions. Pythagoras said, "give me a lever and a place to stand, and I can move the world." In politics, the assumptions upon which an issue position is built – where you stand -- is often challengeable or problematic. When you challenge the assumption, you undermine your opponent's argument on a fundamental level.

### **3. Good arguments are true, sound reasonable (or are verifiable) and appeal to average voters.**

#### **Truth**

There's a comical scene in the movie *Animal House* when the frat brothers are trying to figure out what they are going to say to one member's brother about totally destroying his car. Finally, one member ends the discussion by saying, "Whatever you do, don't tell the truth...anything's better than that!"

In politics sometimes the truth seems to be the worst thing you can say. It's not. A lie is worse. You have to assume your opponent is not stupid, is taking notes (or making a recording), and if you lie, you will be caught. Chances are the person next to you has a smart phone, camera or tablet and is tracking your every move; what you say and do can go viral on the internet in a matter of minutes.

At a debate in Georgia a few years back, an incumbent Congressman claimed he voted for a bill that he, in fact, voted against. When asked about his statement, the Congressman said he never claimed to have voted for the bill. Unfortunately for him, his opponent had a tape of the first debate, and played the recording for the world at a second debate. This made the front page of the daily paper and helped destroy the credibility of the incumbent.

Don't lie.

### **4. Verify**

When President Reagan negotiated the first of many arms agreements with USSR General Secretary Gorbachev, Reagan repeatedly stated the principle of "*Dovorey no provorey*" -- trust, but verify. Basically, Reagan was saying that unlike previous arms agreements, he wasn't going to accept anything the Russians promised, unless it could be verified.

Most people have learned not to trust politicians. They won't believe what you say just because you say it. What you say must sound reasonable, and you must be

able to back your statements with easily verifiable facts.

## **5. Appeal to average voters**

A political sage once said that the American people may be ignorant, but they're not stupid. Most voters lack the information you have. Many of them are just not that interested in politics. Others simply have more immediate concerns on their minds (job, family, traffic, etc.).

Your job as a candidate is not to denigrate the American people for not being more civic minded, but to figure out how to get their attention and how best to communicate with them in ways they can easily understand. Metaphors from everyday life can make a complicated idea crystal clear, where pages of facts and figures will only lead to confusion. Illustrate your public statements with stories and compelling "factoids."

Appeal to people where they live.

## **6. A good attitude is important**

Voters -- and the press -- can tell if you are having a bad time. If you look confident and in control, people will assume you are. They will give more credence to your arguments.

The right attitude about tough questions and your opponent's statements is that they have the same relationship to controlling the issues that hammers and saws have to building a house--they are tools. Use the tools you bring with you *and* the tools your opponent gives you to build your case.

Psych yourself up to having a good time. Relax.

## **7. Every "fact" or assumption placed within a question or statement is assumed true if not challenged.**

If an opponent's statement contains an untrue assumption - and you respond without first contradicting or exposing the assumption - you lose! Arguments for abortion are almost all based upon assumptions that are questionable. Don't give an answer which accepts even the possibility that the assumption is true.

## **What your opponent will say about the abortion issue**

Most of your opponent's points about abortion are designed to create confusion,

particularly regarding the rights of women, and appeal to fear.

## **1. Creating Confusion**

Your pro-choice opponent is hoping to create so much confusion that the abortion issue appears more complicated than it really is. By delving at great length into side issues and complex arguments, they attempt to hide the nature of what is really happening – the taking of a human life.

## **2. Basing their arguments on false assumptions**

Their statements also rely on false assumptions that they hope the voters will accept as true.

Our opponents have worked very hard to convince the public that pro-lifers favor the rights of the unborn over the mother, and that there is no way to recognize the rights of each.

We care about both, which is why there are thousands of pregnancy centers across the country, funded and supported by pro-life individuals, organizations, and churches.

The other major false assumption the pro-abortions forces promote is that the right to “privacy” trumps all other rights. They rely upon the hope that most people don’t give much thought to the idea that all rights have limits and that rights have relativity to each other.

Every single right expressed in the Constitution has been shown to have legitimate limits. Our Founding Fathers understood that absolute freedom always produces anarchy. We need go no farther than the hackneyed but true reality that freedom of speech does not allow one to shout “fire” in a crowded theatre.

We also recognize that rights have a value relative to each other. In every instance in which they're mentioned jointly, the basic rights of all Americans are listed in the following order: Life, Liberty, and Property. We have always held that one person's right to property never exceeds another's rights to liberty, and that one person's right to liberty never exceeds another's right to life.

As for the right to privacy, the issue is not whether there is such a thing, but how far it extends. It must be remembered that the word "privacy" is not found in the Constitution! It is a right which the Supreme Court found in what it called a "penumbra," or shadow, of the Constitution. In effect, what the legalization of

abortion did was say that a right not even expressed in the Constitution - privacy - exceeds the right to human life! There is no carte blanche right to privacy.

Our task is to place these rights in their proper order and to make the case that all of our rights, including privacy and free speech, have limits - and most importantly, that those limits are a good thing.

### **3. Appealing to fear**

Many of your opponent's debating points will be designed to exploit the fact that most people are self-centered. People want to know, "how will an issue affect me?" Your opponent will imply that if abortion is outlawed, it will affect people personally.

Fear is perhaps the most powerful of emotions, and that's why the pro-abortion assumptions that underlie this argument must not go unchallenged by our side. When these assumptions go unchallenged, they are assumed to be true.

Your opponent may claim that teen pregnancy, teen suicide, child abuse, child neglect, poverty among women, divorce, school dropout rates, poverty among children, spouse abuse, and an endless number of society's ills will get worse if abortion is outlawed. They may claim that if a woman is raped, you will force them to carry the child. Personal fear, fear of economic consequences and fear of a dark and unsafe world are the tools your opponent will use to frighten voters away from you.

You must defeat the underlying assumptions. For instance, to refute the assertion that ending abortion would lead to more divorce and spouse abuse you might reply that there's no evidence that the availability of abortion has contributed to lessening these problems. If anything, they've gotten much worse. "Are you telling me that these problems aren't worse than they were 50 years ago?"

The bottom line is that the assumption your opponent is building his fortress on must be undermined. To accept his assumptions is to lose the debate.

### **Some guidelines to winning the abortion debate**



What follow are 36 of the most often used arguments you will run into when debating the abortion issue. This list is by no means exhaustive, but it should help you in preparing for the most common issues likely to arise.

Each statement/question is followed by a listing of the underlying false assumptions, a tutorial on the points you need to make in countering their argument, and a sample response. The response listed here may not fit your pro-life stance but should supply you with food for thought in crafting your own statement.

There is no perfect phrase or set of words that will always win an audience over to your side. Also, words that would sound reasonable when spoken by person "A", might sound silly or unconvincing if made by person "B". The point behind these responses, used by pro-life activists around the country, is to help you in formulating your own response.

As you read the following sample responses you will find issue positions you may or may not agree with. Susan B. Anthony List does not take a position on some of these issues, such as birth control and the death penalty.

**1. "Government has no right to tell a woman what to do with her body. It's a matter of privacy."**

The false assumptions behind the argument:

- a. A baby in the womb is part of her mother's body.
- b. The baby is not an individual.

Tutorial:

Make the argument for the humanity of the child in the womb. Point out that the baby is a separate individual, the basis of your position.

Answer:

***"First, we must recognize that we're talking about more than just a woman's body. The child is separate from her mother, with her own identifiable genetic makeup, possibly a different blood type and perhaps even a different sex. The real challenge is to protect the rights of each of them. Good government policy will recognize the rights of both and would help both of them through a potentially difficult situation."***

***Or***

***"The government can't force you to get a tattoo or remove one, nor can it tell you to get a haircut or clip your fingernails. But a child is not a scab or a fingernail. Yes, an unborn baby is living in its mother's womb, but it is a separate human being. We as a society obviously recoil at the thought of child murder, but that's what abortion is."***

**2. "Neither the U.S. nor state government has ever considered the fetus a person with rights."**

False assumptions:

- a. Abortion should hinge on the definition of "person".
- b. Governments never pass new laws or correct flaws in old laws.

Tutorial:

Challenge the concept that a fetus is not a person. Destroy the underlying assumption of the argument that the government is always right, and government laws can't be changed.

Answer:

***"Prior to 1973 most states did indeed have laws that defined a baby in the womb as a person with rights, so you are very wrong there."***

***"A baby in the womb is a baby in the womb. What else could it be but a small human being? The fetus is not likely to turn into a cat or an appendix or anything else."***

***"You and I know the government is not always right. At one time the government allowed slavery and more recently didn't allow women to vote. I hope to see a day when all life is honored, cherished and protected by our laws."***

3. "Since no one can say when life begins, the issue is not whether abortion is right or wrong, but who decides - the woman or the state?"

False assumptions:

- a. The issue isn't whether abortion is wrong or not.
- b. No one can say when life begins.

Tutorial:

Don't accept these assumptions. It *does* matter whether abortion is wrong. The question of when life begins (biological science proves that life begins at conception) is a smokescreen. The pro-abortionists simply want to recognize the human rights of that life nine months after you do. If the embryonic baby is not "human" life, then what is it? Our argument must be that human life begins at conception, and therefore deserves protection.

Answer:

***"First, it's ridiculous to think that no one can say when life begins. Science has clearly proven that a life begins at conception with the complete genetic makeup of a human being. Whether you want to call this new life an embryo or a fetus, the fact is that it is a human being in a developmental stage of life before birth. Modern ultrasound has given us a window to the womb and has shown conclusively that the unborn is indeed a tiny baby in development; a baby who deserves the same constitutional protection as any other human being. Killing an innocent human being is wrong. That's not a question worth debating."***

4. "How can you say that tissue smaller than a pinhead has constitutional rights?"

False assumptions:

- a. The victim of abortion is always tiny, and therefore isn't a real human being.
- b. An unborn baby is "tissue", like a scab or a fingernail.

Tutorial:

Pro-abortion advocates favor abortion up until the moment before birth, when the child is much larger than a pinhead. Force them to admit this because the American public strongly disapproves of late term abortion. Demonstrate that the unborn child is a human being, no matter what size, and therefore has rights.

Answer:

***"I wasn't under the impression that size is equated with civil rights. How big must you be to have rights? Does Michael Jordan have more rights than you because he's taller? The truth is that many abortions are performed after six weeks - when the baby has a heartbeat, brain waves are detected, the baby's sex is determined and the abortionist can identify the dismembered hands, arms, legs and torso. Way too many abortions are performed after five months when the baby can feel pain. Tissue can't feel pain, but babies can. Yet you favor abortions up until birth."***

**5. "Outlawing abortion won't stop abortions from taking place. Women got abortions before they were legal and will still get them if we make them illegal."**

False assumption:

- a. We only pass those laws we know beforehand will be 100% effective.

Tutorial:

You must annihilate the notion that anti-abortion laws should not be passed because they will not be perfectly obeyed.

Answer:

***"Your statement assumes we only pass laws that will be 100% obeyed. Should we do away with laws against child abuse because child abuse still takes place? Our country makes laws based on whether the activity is acceptable and not on some guarantee that legislation will totally eliminate the activity. Drunk driving laws don't keep all the drunks off the highways, but they help. Laws passed to protect babies in the womb will save lives."***

## 6. "You can't legislate morality."

False assumptions:

- a. Legislation has nothing to do with morality
- b. We don't already legislate morality.

Tutorial:

Too many people thoughtlessly give lip service to the idea that you can't legislate morality. Your task is to show people that we do, and that it is good that we do so.

Answer:

***"The idea we don't legislate morality is totally false. Every law is someone's idea of what is right or wrong. We have laws against polygamy, murder, and slavery because we, as a society, say that such things are wrong. While it's true that laws won't necessarily make people act morally, passing a law is the way society decides what activities are acceptable. Martin Luther King, Jr. made this distinction when he said: 'We hear the familiar cry that morals can't be legislated. This may be true, but behavior can be regulated. The law may not be able to make a man love me, but it can keep him from lynching me.'"***

**7. "Abortion is a decision between a woman, her family and her doctor...no one else!"**

False assumptions:

- a. A woman, her doctor or family should be able to decide whether to kill a baby in the womb.
- b. The unborn child is not a human life, and she can be disposed of with no moral consequences.

Tutorial:

Attack these assumptions! No one should be able to determine if an innocent person lives or dies. Their argument falls apart if you make the case that the child in the womb is a human being. Point out the hypocrisy of not allowing the father and grandparents a say in the decision.

Answer:

***"If we were talking about removing a wart or a fingernail then you would be correct. But the child in the womb is so much more. It is a human life, and our laws should reflect the rights of the mother and the child. No one should have the power to kill another innocent human being – not doctors, not boyfriends, not parents and not even mothers."***

***"It's interesting that you mention family. It's sad that the family is too often not involved in the abortion decision. A father has no right to prevent his unborn child from being killed. Parents can be kept from learning their minor daughter is aborting her child, their grandchild."***

***"Most pro-abortion advocates, including my opponent, oppose informed consent laws. If abortion is an informed choice, why on earth would you oppose legislation to guarantee that all the facts, including health risks and alternatives to abortion, be given to the mother? Why not let the mother see the ultrasound?"***



**8. "If abortion is outlawed, women will be forced to go to back alley butchers."**

False assumptions:

- a. Women are forced to have abortions.
- b. Abortion today is a totally safe procedure.

Tutorial:

This is one of the pro-choice force's strongest arguments and must be countered. No one wants women to be forced to subject themselves to bad or unsafe medical practices.

Answer:

***"No woman should be forced to get an abortion. There are alternatives. There are over 2,700 pregnancy centers across the country - nearly 300 right here in Florida (or wherever) - that help support pregnant women, including providing counseling, parenting classes, referrals for other needed services, maternity and baby clothing, cribs, diapers, toys, etc. If a woman decides to make an adoption plan for her baby, there are many couples waiting in line to welcome that child into their homes."***

***"Some women may feel they have no choice but to risk their lives and health in abortions that also end their babies' lives. But we know that it's the abortion industry who isn't giving them a choice. Using your words, the doctors who perform legal abortions today are also "butchers," operating on perfectly healthy mothers, often destroying perfectly healthy babies for no medical reason whatsoever."***

***"In addition, the abortion industry is not well-regulated, and abortion facilities are not held to the same high legal and sanitary standards as regular outpatient clinics. Women today die on the abortionist's table - or soon after the abortion - due to unsanitary conditions or complications."***

**9. "Why should a fetus that's not viable have more rights than the mother?"**

False assumptions:

- a. Abortion is not legal after "viability."
- b. Before "viability" a baby is not a baby.
- c. You think a baby has more rights than the mother.

Tutorial:

You cannot win this argument unless you address these assumptions. State that in the US abortions are performed in all nine months of pregnancy. Point out the fallacy of the term "viable" and the fact that babies are being delivered earlier and surviving, but don't get drawn into a fight about exactly when viability occurs. That is playing on their field. Emphasize that the baby is a human being and deserves legal protection just as the mother does.

Answer:

***"In the 1970's the Supreme Court decided that viability was achieved only in the last months of pregnancy, but babies are routinely undergoing operations in the womb earlier, and premature babies are surviving earlier and earlier. In fact, the world record keeps getting broken! Science and medicine are moving the viability goal post on a regular basis. But viability is not a good tool to use to decide whether a child lives or dies.***

***"Newborn infants still depend on a caregiver to provide every bit of care, including food, shelter and clothing - just like an unborn baby. The public outcry in several well-publicized criminal cases proves that we as a society rightfully abhor a mother who kills her own toddler because the child interferes with her social life. Claiming that a baby can be killed simply because she is helpless or unwanted is sheer pro-choice fanaticism.***

***"And in case you haven't noticed, abortions are performed on babies here in the US during the entire nine months of pregnancy – viable or not."***

**10. "If abortion is outlawed, women will go to jail for murder even if they have a miscarriage."**

False assumption:

- a. Women went to jail before Roe v. Wade for illegal abortions – even for miscarriages.

Tutorial:

Here your opponents are trying to erect a straw man and then knock the stuffings out of him. Prior to Roe v. Wade judges and prosecutors did not prosecute and convict women for miscarriages, though in some states the words "abortion" and "miscarriage" were often used interchangeably in statutes and case law. The term "miscarriage" as used in these laws denoted "induced abortion" - the deliberate expulsion of a fetus from the womb. No one is suggesting that a spontaneous miscarriage should be the object of criminal investigation or prosecution, and you need to say so.

However, there is a small amount of truth in this attack because in a small number of cases, women who have knowingly injected large quantities of illegal substances into their bodies, or otherwise through egregious neglect have caused miscarriages, have been charged with manslaughter.

Answer:

***"First of all, a spontaneous miscarriage is not to be confused with an induced abortion. I do not support in any way the prosecution of a woman who has an abortion and I don't know anyone who does. It is the abortionist who should be punished. You need only look at pre-Roe decisions, and 400 years of English Common Law, to see who would be prosecuted. Women who have abortions are not held to be at fault. Courts view the woman as a victim in need of protection and not the object of prosecution."***

**11. "If abortion is outlawed, who's going to pay for all these unwanted children?"**

False assumptions:

- a. Limiting abortion will result in more children on welfare and living in poverty.
- b. Children are unwanted.

Tutorial:

You must attack the underlying assumption by demonstrating that legalized abortion has resulted in more, not fewer, unplanned children and no social problems are better since legalized abortion. Also, don't let the "unwanted" line stand; no child should be unwanted.

Answers:

***"The idea that America won't care for these children is just plain wrong. Every adoption agency in this country has long waiting lists of families who are eager to welcome these babies into their homes. Over 100,000 children are adopted in the US each year and according to research by the Adoption Network over 1 million couples are looking to adopt at any given time. There is a treasure of untapped love in America for children yet to be born."***

***"I also challenge the assumption that these children will necessarily be born into poverty and never escape. Abortions are not exclusively sought out by poor women. One of the great things about America is that it is still the land of opportunity and upward mobility is still common."***

**12. "How are we going to feed these children when millions are already starving."**

False assumptions:

- a. Children are starving due to overpopulation.
- b. Limiting abortion will contribute to these problems.

Tutorial:

The assumptions here are ludicrous and cannot be allowed to stand. Anyone who is starving in the U.S. is not starving because of overpopulation. There is, of course, no overpopulation in the U.S., nor would limiting abortion lead to it, nor would it help the starving people in other countries.

Answer:

*"I agree that when you kill someone, they are no longer hungry. But continuing to abort millions of babies will not solve the hunger problem in this country or any other. The fact is, starvation is almost always caused by poverty, natural disasters, politics and drought, not population growth. Otherwise Japan and England would be poverty hell-holes, and of course, they aren't.*

*Using this kind of Malthusian math would mean the human race would have run out of food 100 years ago, and as you can see we are still here (and most of us could stand to lose a few pounds).*

*Besides, human beings are a resource too. That aborted baby might have been a farmer or a scientist who discovers a better way to grow corn and feed millions of people."*

**13. "We have an enormous teenage pregnancy problem in this country. Outlawing abortion can only make it worse."**

False assumptions:

- a. Abortion has prevented the teenage pregnancy problem from getting worse.
- b. It will get even worse without legal abortion.

Tutorial:

The teenage pregnancy problem has gotten worse even with legal abortion (although there has been some lessening in recent years). Abortion has actually contributed to more teen pregnancies.

Answer:

*"Your question suggests that somehow abortion is a solution to teenage sexual proclivities. America's experience since 1973, however, seems to indicate that the opposite is true. In the years after abortion was legalized, teenage pregnancies and abortions increased dramatically. Actually, though, the teenage abortion rate has gone down recently – because fewer teens are getting pregnant."*

**14. "You pro-lifers say that adoption is the answer, but what about the Black children that aren't getting adopted right now?"**

False assumptions:

- a. The only people who want to adopt babies want white babies.
- b. Black families do not want to adopt.

Tutorial:

The questioner is trying to make you sound like a racist by implying that you don't care about children of other races (assuming you are white). Don't let him get away with it. Counterattack by turning his argument against himself.

Answers:

***"I completely reject your inference that abortion is somehow justified for Black Americans because Black children are somehow less desirable. That's an insult to every Black American. In fact, some studies show that Black families adopt children at a higher rate than white families."***

***"The truth of the matter is that the burden and costs of adoption are a large deterrent for many middle- and lower-income families wishing to adopt. Many parents couldn't adopt their own children if to do so meant they had to endure the same process as those trying to adopt! The problem of babies not being adopted is a matter of policy and bureaucracy; not one of desire."***

**15. "If your religion leads you to believe abortion is murder, that's fine. But what gives you the right to force that religious belief on others?"**

False assumptions:

- a. Abortion is a religious, not a civil rights issue.
- b. Adherence to the law should not be forced on people.

Tutorial

It is true that many pro-lifers are religious, and their pro-life stands are drive by their beliefs, but that is a non-starter for non-believers. You must make your case that the humanity of the child, no matter what your belief system, should be paramount. Even the most radical liberals believe in human rights.

Answer:

*"My beliefs about the humanity of unborn children are based on scientific fact. A baby in the womb is a growing human being, with human genetic structure, a beating heart, a brain that will distinguish it from any other species, and sex, eye color, etc. determined at conception. This is biological science, not religion.*

*"You suggest that my principles shouldn't be forced on you. Doesn't every law force you to comply with somebody's principles? Something as simple as seat belts laws impose someone else's belief about how you sit in your own automobile. As a society, our laws are how we establish what behavior is acceptable and what is not. "*

*"America was founded on protecting basic human rights, including the most fundamental -- the right to life. This is a right that every human has from the moment of conception. It is not forcing a belief on anyone to protect that right. It's correctly acknowledging that every human is a person who deserves protection in law. The right to life is in the Declaration of Independence. You can look it up.*



**16. "Since men don't get pregnant, why should they have any say in whether or not women have the right to get an abortion?"**

False assumptions:

- a. Only people who are self-interested can make decisions.
- b. We can legitimize the exclusion of people from decision-making power based on gender, age, etc.

Tutorial:

Although this argument will not be made against women, it is a constant canard of the pro-choice movement. It denies that men have any say whatsoever in the life of the unborn child (these same people want men to take responsibility for child rearing however, the second the baby is born). As a woman, you don't need to defend against the charge unless you want to.

Answer:

***"So young Congressmen shouldn't vote on Social Security issues, and only veterans can vote on the defense budget? Don't be silly.***

***Males are directly affected by abortion and many regret lost fatherhood. Fathers have a right to prevent their unborn child from being destroyed. Men can't become pregnant, but when they were in their mother's womb they could have been aborted. Given that fact, everyone has a legitimate position in this debate.***

***I consider it my duty to advocate on behalf of the innocent and most vulnerable members of our society. As citizens, this is not about our gender, but the need to protect unborn human life."***

**17. "Why don't you pro-lifers help some of the people who are already born?"**

False assumptions:

- a. You are responsible for the actions of all pro-lifers.
- b. Pro-lifers don't already help others.

Tutorial:

It is not your job to defend the pro-life movement...but since your opponent is lumping you in with them, you have to deflect the criticism. Aggressively defend the pro-life movement, and then bring the argument back to what you want to talk about.

Answer:

***"Unlike the abortion industry, the pro-life movement is not a cash and carry operation. There are more abortion alternative organizations in the U.S. than abortion mills, and they're funded and staffed almost entirely by volunteer pro-lifers, not federal dollars like Planned Parenthood. Unlike the abortion industry, they offer real counseling and real help, including material resources, education, parenting support, medical services, and help accessing other needed services like housing or childcare."***

***"But if these groups didn't provide a dime's worth of help, it wouldn't make the case for life any less important. Unborn children deserve the chance to feel the sunshine and gaze at the stars. They deserve the chance to grow up in this wonderful world and maybe someday have children of their own."***

**18. "You try to paint pregnant women as irresponsible. But birth control does fail."**

False assumptions:

- a. You "blame" women for their un-sought pregnancies.
- b. Abortion is not viewed by some people as a form of birth control.

Tutorial:

Don't let them trick you into "blaming" women for becoming pregnant. There is no guilt in pregnancy itself. You need to argue that abortion advocates view abortion as a form of birth control rather than the taking of a human life.

Answer:

***You're right, birth control can fail. And the abortion industry would like us to believe that abortion is just a normal part of family planning and a back-up if contraceptives don't work. But we know that isn't true. Abortion is not family planning."***

***Or***

***"Contraceptives do sometimes fail. But the point is that an unborn child shouldn't have to pay the price for failed birth control. The issue here is not who's to blame, but protecting a life."***

***Or***

***"The truth is: the abortion industry would like us all to think of abortion as just another type of birth control. Nearly 50% of all abortions are repeat abortions and 95% are done for convenience. This isn't because birth control failed; it's because someone failed to use birth control."***

**19. "Why do you people oppose medication abortions so strongly when it's been shown to be safe?"**

False assumptions

- a. Medical (chemical) abortions are safe.
- b. Because it is usually less violent, it's somehow more acceptable.

Tutorial:

Words matter and “prescription” or “medical” abortions sound more benign than “chemical” abortions. Call this kind of abortion a “chemical abortion” which is what it is. Bring the argument back to what is actually going on here: the killing of an unborn child.

Answer:

***“Well, that’s the problem. Chemical abortion has not been shown to be safe. In fact, women are much more likely to end up in the emergency room because of chemical abortions, and those ER visits are just increasing. Chemical abortions have a complication rate four times that of surgical abortions.***

***"Chemical abortions may cause the baby to be aborted at home, right before the mother's eyes. Seeing her dead baby could well have serious emotional effects on the woman, not to mention the severe health risk experienced during the abortion.***

***"There are numerous proven health risks from these abortion drugs. At the minimum, you should agree that abortion drugs should only be dispensed by physicians and not given out like candy at Planned Parenthood facilities. We don't need to turn every mailbox or post office into an abortion clinic."***

**20. "What gives you people the right to deny women their constitutional rights by shooting doctors and illegally blocking clinics?"**

False assumptions:

- a. Most pro-life activity revolves around civil disobedience or worse.
- b. All pro-lifers participate in such activities.

Tutorial:

This is an attempt to tie any pro-life proponent to the actions of a few extremist individuals. The goal is crystal clear: if people see you in the same light as these lawbreakers, your image suffers.

Answer:

***"Violence to address abortion is not justified. Many people have used peaceful assembly to protest a great injustice. The great thing about America is that we have a way to change things without bloodshed -- it's called the ballot box. We have elections in this country to solve our disagreements, and that's what this campaign is all about."***

***"I don't agree that there is some kind of Constitutional right to kill another human being. And until the courts rethink their position on this issue, I salute those who are willing to stand out in the cold and the rain in front of abortion facilities and peacefully try to reach the hearts and minds of mothers who are seeking abortion. That takes a special kind of courage."***

**21. "Why do pro-lifers talk about the sanctity of human life but most favor the death penalty?"\***

False assumptions:

- a. All pro-lifers favor the death penalty.
- b. You can compare capital punishment and abortion.

Tutorial:

Refute the idea that the abortion and capital punishment are comparable.

Answer:

*"There's no way you can compare abortion with the death penalty. In some ways, I wish we could. I wish we could say that every unborn child has the right to legal representation, a trial by jury and a lengthy stay of execution before she is executed. But there is no trial. In fact, the condemned isn't even charged with a crime: simply executed. Abortion is a decision to snuff out the life of an innocent, growing baby. I'm sorry, but when I think about that tiny, innocent baby, I can't compare her to a convicted murderer. "*

*Or*

*"I'm opposed to both. Human life is sacred. The difference is that in prison, a convicted murderer can be rehabilitated...can make something of his life or make his peace with God. An aborted baby never even gets the chance to feel the sunshine and make any choice at all."*

\*While the membership of SBA List is concerned about all human life, we are primarily an organization dedicating to stamping out abortion. We do not take an official position on issues such as the death penalty, birth control, etc.

**22. “Why is it that the very people so opposed to abortion are the same ones who fight against sex education and birth control for our teenagers?”**

False assumptions:

- a. You are opposed to all sex-ed and birth control.
- b. That your opposition or support of sex education has something to do with the price of tea in China, or in this case, abortion.

Tutorial:

Don't let your opponent box you into approving or disapproving of birth control (unless you want to). Instead, counterattack against the use of abortion as birth control.

Answer:

*"I'm sorry if someone has misstated the facts to you. I'm not opposed to sex education or birth control. I'm deeply disturbed, however, that the abortion industry wants to equate abortion to birth control. Nearly one out of every two women obtaining an abortion today has had at least one previous abortion (footnote). I don't disagree that we need to prevent unintended pregnancies but taking the life of a child after he is conceived is unjustified."*

*Or*

*"The best form of birth control I know is abstinence. And that form of birth control is being taught in more and more sex education programs. But again, you are trying to draw this discussion away from the protection of the life of a child. Intelligent people can disagree about the effectiveness or need for sex-ed, but our society must protect human life"*

- *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

**23. "The government has no right to tell a woman that she has to have a child."**

False assumption:

- a. Limiting abortion is the same thing as the government telling a woman she must have a child.

Tutorial:

This argument asserts that sexual relations and the resulting pregnancies are value-free, and that the mother is somehow not a party to her pregnancy. The challenge here is to reject this assertion without appearing to be a non-caring ogre.

Answer:

***"Limiting abortion has nothing to do with forcing a woman to have a child. The truth is, once a woman is pregnant, she already has a child. The government has not forced her to become pregnant! The only question that remains is: will her child live or be destroyed? Once a woman is pregnant, we as a caring society have a responsibility to protect the rights of both mother and child"***



**24. "Since women are going to have them anyway, shouldn't they be allowed to have safe abortions in a clean environment?"**

False assumptions:

- a. Legalizing abortion hasn't increased the number of abortions.
- b. Abortion clinics are safe and hygienic.

Tutorial:

There are several problems with this argument. No, they are not going to have abortions anyway, and no, abortion clinics are notoriously bad places (see Gosnell). Challenge these statements.

Answer:

*"I don't see how you can call an event in which a human being dies every time it happens - safe. Also, your question makes two assumptions which are totally false. The first is that abortions we have now are perfectly safe. Women today are dying from legal abortions. Literally thousands are suffering from a wide range of physical complications caused by abortion profiteers. And I can't let your other point stand unchallenged. Today there are communities in America where the number of abortions each year outdistances the number of live births. You certainly never saw anything like that before abortions were legalized."*

*Or*

*"Abortions are nowhere near as safe as the abortion clinics would have you believe. Most people would be appalled to see how little monitoring and regulation of abortion clinics is actually done. And efforts to pass strict laws regarding clinic regulation are always opposed by pro-abortion groups. It's unbelievable that these groups claim to support women's health and then oppose laws to regulate abortion clinics in the same way that other medical clinics are regulated."*

*"Your question also assumes that millions of women sought abortions before they became legal and that thousands were dying in back-alley abortions. That isn't true – in fact, the source of that statistic later admitted he completely made it up in order to push for legalized abortion."*

**25. "What gives the government the right to come into our bedrooms?"**

False assumptions:

- a. Banning abortion gives the government the right to regulate sexual behavior.
- b. Banning abortion will advance government monitoring of all personal aspects of life.

Tutorial:

This conflates the creation of a child with the destruction of one, and is risible on its face, but that doesn't mean the argument has no weight. This is a real attempt to play on fear of government intrusion in our lives. The key here is to dispel the assumption that anti-abortions laws are going to allow Big Brother to monitor and regulate our private lives.

Answer:

***"I don't see how people's bedrooms fit in here. A child may be conceived in the bedroom, but that has nothing to do with destroying an unborn child through an abortion.***

***"It's not the government who's trying to come into our bedrooms, it's the abortion industry. It's not government intrusion to protect life and prevent dangerous at-home abortions..."***

**26. "You say you're pro-family. What about the strain an unwanted child places on the family?"**

False assumption:

- a. Unplanned children always naturally result in more strain on the family unit.

Tutorial:

Abortion advocates are trying to take the "pro-family" image away from the pro-life people and acquire it for themselves. They realize the public is very concerned about the disintegration of the family, and they would like to make it look like we favor something that might injure the family.

Answer:

***"I guess you are then saying that relieving strain is more important than human life. If your position on this matter is accurate, then it would stand to reason that the American family would have been under greater strain back when families were larger. In reality, since abortion was legalized and family size has decreased, we've seen a steady and profound decline in the strength of the American family - and it continues to decline as our abortion rate increases. It's apparent that killing an unplanned child has done nothing to reduce strain on, or breakdown of, the American family."***

***"There is plenty of evidence that children, unplanned or otherwise, strengthen families. Certainly, children bring joy into the lives of millions of parents. If you don't believe me, just ask them."***

**27. "Born Alive legislation is nothing more than an attempt to intimidate doctors and prevent women from accessing health care."**

False assumptions:

- a. Born alive legislation is not needed because botched abortions never happen.
- b. This legislation is a cynical attempt on the part of pro-lifers to intimate abortion providers from practicing.
- c. Abortion is health care (sigh).

Tutorial:

Win this issue by stating why born alive legislation is necessary and what it does. The vast majority of Americans agree with us on this issue and our opponents really have no good counter to the facts.

Answer:

***"It is rare, but it happens more often than you would think. There are now hundreds of abortion survivors who have lived to tell about it, and sadly others who did not survive but we know of through some recent state reporting.***

***"What we are talking about here is simply requiring doctors and nurses to treat newborns born after botched abortions like newborns. These are human babies and even though the abortionist would prefer they die, the least we can do is give them the same care we would give any newborn baby. That is simple humanity, and I am mystified why anyone would oppose such care."***

**28. “Over 100 million Americans suffer from diseases that can eventually be treated or even cured with embryonic stem cell therapy. These embryos will never develop into human beings, and it is best that they be used for the purpose of saving human life.”**

False assumptions:

- a. Science has shown embryonic stem cells to be safe and effective at treating illness or injury.
- b. Embryonic human life is not human life.

Tutorial:

Facts! Facts! Facts! Despite the promises, not a single treatment or cure has been produced from embryonic stem cell research. There is very little evidence that embryonic stem cells are effective in treating disease and repairing tissue. Issues like their propensity to form tumors and trigger immune responses have not been resolved. However, there are thousands of patients who have already been successfully treated using **adult stem cells**. This has been accomplished without resorting to destroying an embryo - which is a unique and fully human being, though in a very early stage of development, and thus worthy of protection.

Answer:

***“It is outrageous to continually invest so much in something which has never produced a single cure and destroys our most valuable resource - human life. More research using ethical adult stem cells, however, is worthy of investment. No human life is destroyed in the process and adult stem cells have proven extremely effective in treating major injuries as well as diseases such as sickle cell anemia, Parkinson’s, heart disease, and leukemia. How can you oppose this life-saving science?”***

**29. "Abortion clinic regulations are unnecessary and place such onerous burdens on the clinic that many are forced to close. The regulations restrict women's access to reproductive health care and other services provided at some clinics, such as cancer screenings and annual checkups."**

False assumptions:

- a. Abortion centers do not need to be regulated.
- b. Easy access to abortion is more important than a woman's health and well-being.
- c. Abortion centers provide cancer screenings and checkups.

Tutorial:

Abortion proponents have long argued that legalized abortion is beneficial to the health of American women. They have argued that legalized abortion makes the abortion procedure safer as it enables abortion to be part of mainstream medical care with qualified doctors and safe facilities. However, this has been proven not to be the case. Legalized abortion has not eliminated substandard medical care, prevented the use of unsanitary procedure rooms or unsterile equipment, or prevented women from dying of unsafe abortions. This has been demonstrated in cases such as abortionist Kermit Gosnell's "house of horrors". Furthermore, a quick look at Planned Parenthood's (the nation's largest abortion provider) annual report shows that they do not provide mammograms, they provide referrals.

Answer:

***"It is utterly ridiculous that hair salons and tattoo parlors should be more tightly regulated than abortion centers. Abortion is an invasive surgical procedure which can result in numerous and serious complications such as hemorrhaging, infection, uterine perforation, and blood clots. These facilities must be held to the same commonsense standards as other medical facilities to ensure proper care and safety of women.***

***"I am against abortion because it kills a human life. But if we are going to allow abortion clinics to operate, then we must hold them to the same health and safety regulations as any other outpatient facility. If this cuts into the profits of the abortion clinic that's just too bad. The safety and well-being of the mothers must come first."***

**30. “You people would force a woman who has been raped to give birth to the child. You are willing to ruin an innocent woman’s life because of your extreme views?”**

False assumptions:

- a. Giving birth to a child is a crime analogous with rape
- b. Only one innocent life is at stake here
- c. The sins of the father can be visited upon the child

Tutorial:

Even though it is hard to imagine the necessity, you have to first establish your abhorrence of the crime before you can address the issue. Otherwise, your opponent will imply that you think rape is not such a bad thing.

The only way you can win this argument is to shift the emphasis away from the crime to the child. Punishing the child will not undo the rape.

Don’t jump down a rabbit hole chasing definitions and extremely rare situations. The Todd Akin (US Senate candidate in 2012) “legitimate rape” comment that stirred up so much controversy was Akin’s attempt to distinguish between women who wanted to use rape as an excuse for free birth control (abortion), as opposed to women who had actually been raped. That didn’t work so well so don’t make the same mistake.

Answer:

***“Rape is a terrible crime, and it deserves to be punished to the fullest extent of the law. I feel nothing but compassion for these victims. Yet in the small number of cases that a child has been created, that child is innocent and is in no way responsible for the crime. Every human being deserves a chance at life and deserves constitutional protections.***

***“We cannot punish the perpetrator by putting a child to death. Instead, we should do everything we can to support and help the mother, giving her every means possible to help her through her pregnancy and give the child a loving home.”***

31. ***“Requiring women to have ultrasounds is like requiring them to be raped again.”***

False assumptions:

- a. All ultrasounds are invasive
- b. Your opponent opposes ultrasounds because they care about the mother’s well-being, not because they fear that ultrasounds discourage abortion

Tutorial:

Our opponents have made some headway on this issue by demagoguing it. If you let them define ultrasounds as requiring a vaginal probe, you lose. Polling shows that position is very unpopular, whereas requiring that a doctor show the mother a picture of her baby in the womb is not.

Answer:

***“That’s a bunch of garbage and you know it. First, there are different kinds of ultrasounds and the kind you are describing are not required. In fact, an ultrasound is a normal part of the abortion procedure so the doctor can tell how far along the pregnancy is and rule out dangerous ectopic pregnancies. The truth is you are opposed to ultrasounds because when mothers see their babies in the womb, and realize they are live human beings, they are much less likely to have an abortion.”***



**32. “Everyone should abide by the law, which means that companies and institutions must provide reproductive health care to their employees no matter whether they oppose abortion or not. Likewise, a doctor should not be allowed to avoid treating a patient because he disagrees with her political philosophy.”**

False assumptions:

- a. Churches and religious organizations should be treated like any other institutions.
- b. The right to an abortion overrides all considerations of conscience, morality, and religion.
- c. Doctors and nurses have no conscience protections
- d. Once again, abortion is “reproductive healthcare.”

Tutorial:

The subject of conscience protection is murky and complicated. People think doctors should provide services to whoever needs them, but they also believe doctors and nurses should not be forced to perform abortions.

Answer:

***“The current administration has renewed the assault against the First Amendment’s Freedom of Conscience protections. A baker must be forced to bake a cake celebrating devil worshipers. Doctors must be made to perform abortions on teenagers. The Little Sisters of the Poor must violate their religious vows and provide birth control and abortion coverage. Well either this is a free country, or it isn’t. We are not talking about speed limits; we are talking about the taking of a human life. A majority of Americans know that abortion is wrong, and they should not be forced to pay for them, facilitate them and certainly not forced to perform them. My opponent seems happy to engage in coercion, but I am not.”***

**33. “If you are so concerned about the rights of women, why do you oppose the Equal Rights Amendment?”**

False Assumptions

- a. The Equal Rights Amendment would actually protect the rights of women.
- b. It is still possible to enact the ERA.
- c. You oppose equal rights for women.
- d. Equal rights are not already protected by the Constitution.

Tutorial:

This is a tough one because the proponents of the ERA say they just want women to be treated equally, which is hard to fault. But that’s not what they are really after. The real reason behind the push for the ERA is to boost abortion, and you need to point that out.

Even though the ERA failed to meet the deadline for passage and has been ruled by any number of courts as having failed, its proponents insist that even at this late date the rules can be changed and the ERA can be added to the Constitution. They are wrong, but that is not a rabbit hole you have time to explore.

Focus your opposition on abortion and the lack of need for the ERA.

Answer:

***“The problem with the ERA is that it sounds pretty good. Who, after all, is against equal rights? I know I’m not. But just because you claim a magic elixir will grow hair on a billiard ball doesn’t mean that it will. The reason why many people oppose the ERA is that it would force the courts and the legislatures to treat men and women exactly the same, with no regard to physical and other difference between the sexes. That would mean the end of any program designed to help women, the end of separate facilities for the sexes, the end of women’s sports, etc.***

***You and I know that the real reason behind the push for the ERA is to insert legalized abortion into the Constitution. That’s why NARAL and Planned Parenthood salivate over the idea of passing it. Only women can be denied the right to an abortion so judges in states that have their own version of the ERA have ruled bans on abortion unconstitutional. Equal rights for men and women are already protected by the Constitution, the bill of rights and the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment. We don’t need to open the ERA can of worms so that abortion clinics can round up more customers.”***

**34. “Insisting on parental consent and parental notification leads to terrible results for pregnant teenagers like physical abuse and abandonment as well as denying them access to needed health care.”**

False Assumptions

- a. Teenage girls are competent to make serious decisions about their health
- b. Parents should have no say in their daughter’s well-being if pregnancy is involved
- c. Parents are the enemy and pregnant teenage girls need to be protected from them.

Tutorial:

The only way your opponent wins this discussion is if the focus is on those rare situations when the parents are actually abusive or incompetent. Most American agree that children should not be in charge of their own medical care, and that parents should be involved in serious decisions like abortion. Focus on parental rights and the need for adult guidance for young people.

Answer:

*“As a society, we require parental consent before teenagers can get a credit card, or a learner’s permit, or a tattoo or even getting their ears pierced. That’s because we know that most teenagers lack the maturity to make serious decisions on their own. The decision to have an abortion is pretty serious, and parents must be involved. Because they are responsible for the health and safety of the child, parents have a right to know. That child has a right to the emotional support of her family. Do you really think knowledge about a serious operation like an abortion should be kept from parents?”*

*“In those exceptional cases where parents are unfit to make these decisions, most state laws allow for a responsible adult or guardian ad litem to step in and assist the young girl during this trying time.”*

*“The fact is, when we do away with parental consent, we aren’t helping young girls. We’re just enabling abusers and traffickers. Time after time, the abortion industry has failed to report these crimes and put girls right back in the hands of their abusers.”*

**35. “You want to overturn Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decision that is the only defense women have against attempts to deny them access to reproductive health care.”**

False Assumptions:

- a. Roe v. Wade is the only way to protect access to abortion
- b. Roe v. Wade can't be overturned
- c. Abortion is health care

Tutorial:

As noted in the chapter on polling, most Americans oppose repealing Roe v. Wade, though there is a lot of confusion about just what Roe v. Wade does.

You win this argument not by teaching the audience what Roe does, but by attacking its weaknesses. It is undemocratic, badly decided and out of date.

Answer:

***“Roe V. Wade was decided in the 1970’s by the Warren Court, overturning abortion laws passed by our elected representatives in all 50 states. It created a “right to privacy” which was never mentioned in the Constitution and was made up from whole cloth. Even liberal justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg thought the ruling was a travesty. Now pro-abortion advocates treat the ruling like it was established truth carved on tablets and handed down from on high. It was a bad decision, and it needs to go.”***

***“In the 50 years since Roe v. Wade Americans have been denied a right to have a say in their abortion laws. The fact that we are still fighting and arguing about this issue is proof that it is too important to leave to the courts, and ought to be settled at the ballot box.”***

***“Think about it. Roe v. Wade established a viability standard based upon 1970’s medicine. We now know from ultrasounds and improved medical techniques that children have heartbeats at 15 weeks. At that point they can hear, taste, make faces and even feel pain. Children are born and survive at 21 weeks gestation. Operations are performed on children in the womb. At a minimum, Roe v. Wade needs to be updated to reflect these changes in our scientific knowledge. Also, I totally reject the idea that once the court has made a ruling it can’t be reviewed or overruled. Does Dred Scott mean anything to you? Slavery was once allowed in the US and so was child labor. We progress, and our laws and Constitution need to progress with us.”***

**36. “Waiting periods are just another means of preventing poor people from receiving reproductive health care. Many poor people can’t afford to take two days or three days away from work or their family.”**

False Assumptions:

- a. Abortion is masquerading as our old friend reproductive rights
- b. The purpose of waiting periods is to deny abortions to poor people
- c. Having an abortion is not that big a deal.

Tutorial:

Waiting periods discourage hasty decisions. Abortion advocates don’t want women to re-think their decision to have an abortion because some will decide it’s a bad idea. Our job is to remind people that abortion is an important life-ending decision and deserves to be taken seriously even if that involves a little inconvenience.

Answer:

***“Requiring someone to wait a little before making a serious decision, like ending a human life, is quite reasonable. In many states you must wait to buy a gun, a house, or even sign a construction contract for that matter.”***

***“I have never understood these attacks on efforts to allow mothers to see the ultrasound of their baby and to take some time for reflection. You can change your reservations at a restaurant, or decide to forgo that trip to Florida, but an abortion is an irrevocable decision. It deserves serious consideration.”***

