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**EXPERT INSIGHT** | Center for American Values

# **MEANINGFUL PROGRESS AFTER *DOBBS* CONTINUES WITH NORTH CAROLINA'S RECENT SUPPORT FOR LIFE**

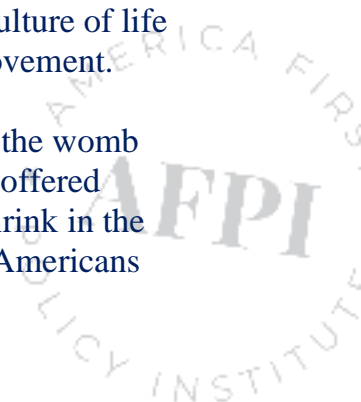
*Pastor Paula White-Cain*

## **TOPLINE POINTS**

- The *Dobbs* decision and the overriding of Gov. Roy Cooper's veto by the North Carolina legislature show that powerful actions to protect the unborn are indeed possible.
- Polling shows that a majority of Americans favor restricting abortions, and policy change will need to be incremental in the right direction.
- Pro-life Americans should celebrate these victories but recognize that the work is far from over in protecting women and the unborn.

As the Pro-Life Movement celebrated the first anniversary of the *Dobbs* decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade*, Americans should realize that the work to protect women and the unborn is far from over. In May, North Carolina lawmakers took bold action to protect the sanctity of life by overriding Gov. Roy Cooper's veto of Senate Bill 20. This important measure limits most abortions after 12 weeks and requires a woman to meet with a physician in person at least 72 hours before undergoing an abortion procedure. This legislation not only demonstrates a strong commitment to cultivating a culture of life and supporting women, but it symbolizes a beacon of hope for the pro-life movement.

Each vote in favor of overturning the veto showed support for those in the womb who are unable to advocate for themselves and for the women who should be offered support during pregnancy. These North Carolina champions for life did not shrink in the face of opposition but instead used the opportunity to safeguard life. Pro-life Americans



can be confident this action and other similar policies will help ensure that many precious lives are saved.

Although this is a great victory, the Pro-Life Movement must remain focused on supporting women. This has become even more apparent as America adjusts to a new abortion landscape in a post-*Roe* America in which the issue has largely shifted to the states. Each state policymaker matters in this fight for life as we work to secure resources for mothers and fathers and encourage alternatives to abortion. For perspective, if only one North Carolina senator had voted in favor of the Governor's veto, the override would have been defeated. This reality highlights how small the margins can be in government actions that save the unborn, champion women, and advance further measures that support life through sound public policy in the United States.

Moving forward, we must understand that progress will take time, and our policy wins may include incremental moves in the right direction that ultimately result in the protection of life beginning at conception. Although left-wing extremists continually seek ways to amplify abortion throughout the entire pregnancy, most Americans oppose abortion after the first trimester. According to an NPR/PBS NewsHour/Marist poll in April 2023, two in three Americans believe that abortion should be permitted only within the first three months.

The North Carolina decision and this recent national poll reveal positive steps toward guaranteeing rights to all human beings regardless of location inside or outside the womb, but our work is far from done. We must now turn our attention to other raging battles, including increased access to abortion pills through telehealth and retail pharmacies, a recent phenomenon that challenges interstate life-supporting regulations. The pro-life movement wins when it focuses on supporting women and families, securing the rights and responsibilities of the father, generating support for organizations like Pregnancy Resource Centers, and ultimately championing policy that allows for fewer abortions.

The one-year anniversary of the *Dobbs* decision and the pro-life victory in North Carolina are reminders that hard work and prayer can bring about powerful change. The United States Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs* overturned decades of bad law that empowered federal abortion provisions that the Constitution never guaranteed, and its decision is one that many believed would never happen. These victories should be celebrated, but we should be challenged to never be silent on behalf of women and the unborn, even when the margins for success seem small.

