

Stability of earth,  
Firmness of rock.

I arise today  
Through God's strength to pilot me,  
God's might to uphold me,  
God's wisdom to guide me,  
God's eye to look before me,  
God's ear to hear me,  
God's word to speak for me,  
God's hand to guard me,  
God's way to lie before me,  
God's shield to protect me,  
God's host to save me,  
From snares of devils,  
From temptations of vices,  
From everyone who shall wish me ill,  
Afar and anear,  
Alone and in multitude.

I summon today all these powers between me  
and those evils,  
Against every cruel merciless power that  
may oppose my body and soul,  
Against incantations of false prophets,  
Against black laws of pagandom,  
Against false laws of heretics,  
Against craft of idolatry,  
Against spells of witches and smiths and wizards,  
Against every knowledge that corrupts  
man's body and soul.

Christ to shield me today,  
Against poison, against burning,  
Against drowning, against wounding,  
So that there may come to me abundance of  
reward,  
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind  
me,  
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ  
above me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit  
down, Christ when I rise,  
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks  
of me,  
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks  
of me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today  
Through a mighty strength, the invocation  
of the Trinity,  
Through belief in the threeness,  
Through confession of the oneness,  
Of the Creator of Creation.

#### PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 20, 1997*

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to voice my opposition to H.R. 1122. H.R. 1122 as it is written now presents us with a moral issue, a religious issue and, as Members of Congress who have sworn to uphold the U.S. Constitution, a constitutional issue.

Partial-birth abortions are performed because a physician, with the benefit of his expertise and experience, determines that, given a woman's particular circumstances, this procedure is the safest available to her; that this is the procedure most likely to preserve her health and her future fertility. Only a doctor can make this determination. We, in Congress, should not interfere with the close relationship that exists between a doctor and patient; but more importantly her spiritual leader and her God.

It is a tragic fact that sometimes a mother's health is threatened by the abnormalities of the fetus that she is carrying. When this occurs the mother is faced with a terrible decision whether to carry a fetus suffering from fatal anomalies to term and in so doing jeopardize her own health and future fertility or whether to abort the fetus and preserve her chances of bringing a later healthy life into the world.

When a woman is faced with this type of painful circumstance, it is one that she should face free from Government interference. This is too intimate, too personal, and too fragile a decision to be a choice made by the Government. We should protect the sanctity of the woman's right to privacy and of the home by letting this choice remain in her hands. Families and their physicians, not politicians, should make these difficult decisions. It is a decision that should be between a woman, her spiritual leader, and her God.

I am reminded of the story of King Solomon. In that story Solomon is faced with deciding between two women who claim that a certain male child is their own. The power and authority to determine to whom that child belongs rests only with King Solomon, but in his wisdom this man gave those mothers the power to choose the child's fate. In his wisdom, King Solomon realized that the relationship between a mother and child is one with which the State should not interfere.

I believe that anti-abortion activists are truly committed to preserving the sanctity of life. However, those Members in their wisdom, should accept a compromise that would protect the health and life of the mother. With such an exception this legislation would have been made law last year and many of these procedures could have been averted.

In addition, we can not ignore the fact that H.R. 1122 is unconstitutional. We, in Congress, should not attempt to undercut the law of the land as set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Roe versus Wade*. In *Roe* the Supreme Court held that women had a privacy interest in electing to have an abortion. This right is qualified, however, and so must be balanced against the State's interest in protecting prenatal life. The *Roe* Court determined that post-viability the State has a compelling interest in protecting prenatal life and may ban abortion, except when necessary to preserve the woman's life or health. In line with this decision, 41 States have already passed bans on late term abortions, except where the life or health of the mother is involved.

In *Planned Parenthood versus Casey*, the Court held that the States may not limit a woman's right to an abortion prior to viability when it places an "undue burden" on that right. An undue burden is one that has "the purpose or effect of placing a substantial obstacle in the path of a woman seeking an abortion of a nonviable fetus." Let's not try to overturn the law of the land.

H.R. 1122 in its current form interferes with a woman's access to the abortion procedure that her doctor has determined to be safest for her, and so unduly burdens her right to choose. It is therefore inconsistent with the principles outlined in *Roe* and *Casey*, which have been reaffirmed by every subsequent Supreme Court decision on this issue, and so is unconstitutional.

I ask my colleagues to vote against H.R. 1122 and in so doing signal their commitment

to preserving the health and future fertility of American women and to upholding the U.S. Constitution.

#### TRAGEDIES ARE EYE-OPENING

**HON. SCOTTY BAESLER**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 21, 1997*

Mr. BAESLER. Mr. Speaker, tragedies are eye-opening. They reveal a great deal about the human spirit. They teach us about the value of things we often take for granted in our fast-paced workaday world. Natural disasters have a way of changing our smug assumptions about being self-made people who can live to ourselves and by ourselves.

Nevertheless, after nights of rain and ruin, floodwaters and frustration, storm damage and damaged nerves, mud and swamped homes and businesses, we are ready to learn a little more about the human spirit and the need for community.

The recent weather threw Kentucky a curve ball. Streets became canals and roadways became rivers. Cars and trucks competed with boats and rafts for the right of way. Floodwaters transformed neighborhood parks into tributaries as nature ran amok.

Yet during those dreary days, something remarkable occurred. The human spirit also underwent a transformation. Not too long ago the practice of bashing the Federal Government was the number one spectator sport. Not anymore in Kentucky.

Homeowners and residents were, to say the least, grateful for the role played by officials with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Not only was the agency Johnny-on-the-spot in responding to the emergency, it also brought comfort to worried residents who saw their homes and hopes swallowed by floodwaters.

From the Governor and other State officials on down the line to local leaders, our public servants became just that: the servants of the people in need. They were at the top of their forms too.

Emergency crews worked around the clock to ensure that Kentuckians would have the resources not only to combat and cope with the flooding, but also to provide the means of recovering from its toll. The spirit of cooperation came alive in the floodwaters and storm damage. County officials worked across county lines to make sure that residents had bottled water, dry clothing, and temporary ports in the storm. The business community pitched in. They hauled fresh water supplies by rail to weather-weary residents. They donated large sums of money to help victims recover.

The disaster transformed ordinary citizens into local heroes. They pulled people from rooftop refuges and snatched weary drivers from cars stalled in high water. The rescuers battled swift currents in rowboats, crossed streams transformed overnight into raging rivers and battled mudslides to help residents from their inundated homes.

Centuries ago someone asked the question, "who is my neighbor?" Although the word comes from an old English word meaning "near dweller," the proximity of people does not define neighborliness.

It is the proximity of the human heart during the crisis moment that defines it. In a crisis

even a stranger can become a neighbor. The fellowman becomes the object of our fellow feeling, which can best be defined as the sympathetic awareness of others.

Good Samaritans appeared overnight. Neighbors pitched in to help each other and in so doing, fortified themselves as important

cogs in the art of survival. Neighbors not only got to know each other, they got to help each other, creating bonds that will last a lifetime.

It started as an act of God. At least that is what insurance companies call it. Yet it developed into a drama of human beings acting on behalf of others. Everyone pitched in to help

each other cope with one of the worst natural disasters to hit Kentucky in a generation.

In this one moment in time, the State really became a commonwealth: common men and women who summoned up the riches of the human spirit to help others.

As we said, tragedies are eyeopening.