

## Pro-Life and Pro-Choice advocates hold separate rallies at Capitol

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The south steps of the State Capitol - "Pro Life" blue.

The north steps -- "Pro Choice" orange -- celebrating the anniversary of Roe V. Wade.

"This year is the 42nd where we are holding a rally in celebration of that pivotal court case," said Katherine Rompel with Texas Project Counter, a reproductive rights group.

She says they're waiting to see what the courts decide about House Bill 2, the tough restrictions on abortions here in Texas.

"These restrictive forces that are limiting the number of weeks for abortion care and also that are closing down clinics all across the state...this is harmful to women in the Rio Grande Valley and far west Texas and the panhandle who are not able to seek these services because they keep shutting down the clinics," Rompel said.

Pro Choice advocate Neil Kimmelman came out to support his wife, daughter and all of the other women close to his heart.

"I believe it's very important that they have the opportunity to make the choices in their life if they have to. No woman wants to have an abortion. It just so happens that certain circumstances in their life bring this about," he said.

Back on the south side, Joe Pojman with Texas Alliance for Life says they've been holding the Texas Rally for Life for more than 20 years.

"This event commemorates what we consider to be the tragic U.S. Supreme Court Roe V. Wade decision in which the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Texas Protective Law 42 years ago...at that time, through the entire 9 months of pregnancy," Pojman said.

Before the pro-life rally started, advocates marched to the Capitol...some pro-choice advocates like Susan Perales stood by to let their voices be heard too.

"It's not anyone else's decision or right to impose their religious beliefs on anyone else. And I think that's what drives their viewpoint," she said.

Pro-lifer Amber Delaney doesn't agree with that sentiment. She had an abortion when she was in college and has regretted it ever since. Her advice to young women considering that option..."stop."

"It's not a religious thing, it's a you know...what's right for a woman? What's right for their emotional state? What is right for them long term? We know that women that go through abortions have increased suicide rate the first year after an abortion. We know that there's significant depression and there's also medical...infection...and problems that come along with it. Like for me, I became infertile after my abortion," Delaney said.

Among the honored guests at the Rally for Life -- Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott and new Land Commissioner George P. Bush.

"By standing here today, we show that every life matters. By standing here today, we hope that every life will be one day protected under the law. And by standing here today we know that every life is created in God's own image," Bush said.

The Texas Alliance for Life says most of HB2 is being enforced but the ambulatory surgical center requirement is being reviewed by an appeals court. They're hoping for a decision soon.

In the meantime, the next thing they're going after in the legislature is preventing women from being forced into abortions -- especially in human trafficking situations.

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