

Hi my name is Tate Hendricks and I am writing to the Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee today in favor of HB 1373. I am writing this from the point of view of a Christian abolitionist. I agree with the pro-life position that abortion is murder and that it ought to be abolished in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, there is forgiveness to be found in Christ for abortion, but that does not mean it ought to be legal, and it does not negate the necessity of establishing justice.

If abortion is murder, and we all know it is, it ought to be criminalized as such. Abolitionists believe that abortion must be totally abolished through a law which makes preborn children equal under law. Equal protection for preborn children would mean that preborn children would be afforded all the same legal protections that all of us enjoy. It would mean that nobody -- not father, mother, doctor, or anyone else -- is permitted to participate in the murder of a child in the womb. It would mean the available penalties for murdering any other person would be available for anyone found guilty of knowingly murdering a preborn human being. Equal protection would not mean that every mother or father who murders their child would receive murder charges. There are all sorts mitigating and exculpating factors that might lessen or eliminate the penalty for an aborting parent in a given situation. Some women are victims who are coerced into having abortions, and will not face any charges. Some will deserve second- or third-degree murder charges based on the circumstances. Some will receive immunity by testifying against the abortionist or pill trafficker. Each person charged with murder by abortion would receive all the same due process and opportunities for appeal that all defendants receive. This is the abolitionist position.

Put simply, equal protection is the American legal term for the Biblical principle of impartiality. Leviticus 19:15 commands to Israel's judges, "You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor." Equal protection is the fulfillment of this principle. The 14th amendment of the U.S. Constitution reads, "No state shall...deny to any person within its jurisdiction the *equal protection* of the laws." This means that every state is prohibited from separating out classes of people who get varying levels of legal protection. Everyone must be treated as legal equals. Properly understood and applied, the 14th amendment prohibits any state from allowing crimes like homicide to be committed against preborn human beings, and further prohibits states from treating preborn children differently under law. Rather than making political calculations, abolitionists simply proclaim the truth that abortion is murder and must be abolished without shying away from any of the perceived consequences of that position. We demand justice through equal protection of the law for all image bearers of God. Equal justice and the abolition of abortion are thwarted by the pro-life movement's refusal to fully criminalize abortion.

I have seen first hand the destruction and wickedness of abortion and pray that it would come to an end. There is great pain and suffering and even wrath that awaits those who do not repent of their sins and turn to Christ. This matter is crucial in upholding the foundations which our country was founded upon, which is Christianity. From the moment of conception, a baby deserves equal protection. All humans are made in the image of God and deserve to be treated as such. I pray that everyone would recognize that they were created for a larger purpose to enjoy God and glorify Him forever. I am in FULL support of HB 1373 and the abolishment of abortion.