

COMMISSIONERS COURT OF RAINS COUNTY

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS, OUTLAWING ABORTION WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF RAINS COUNTY, DECLARING RAINS COUNTY A SANCTUARY COUNTY FOR THE UNBORN, MAKING VARIOUS PROVISIONS AND FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that Thomas Jefferson was right when he said to Maryland Republicans in 1809, "*The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government.*"

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that human life begins at conception; and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that abortion is a murderous act of violence that purposefully and knowingly terminates an unborn human life; and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds all unborn children are human beings who are entitled to the full and equal protection of the laws that prohibit violence against other human beings; and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that abortion-inducing drugs are being mailed into communities across Texas from unregulated abortion pill trafficking organizations outside of the State of Texas and that the taking of these drugs, which exist for the purpose of terminating the life of an unborn child, have also resulted in adverse events which have left some women seeking emergency medical care; and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that abortion-traffickers are taking pregnant mothers across state lines to abortion facilities in New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, and other abortion access states and then are sent back to Texas where communities are forced to deal with the aftermath in their homes, schools, churches, and hospitals.

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that in addition to the life-affirming services which are already being provided by organizations in Rains County, the Thriving Texas Families program (also known as the Texas Alternatives to Abortion program) is in place, which promotes childbirth and provides support services to pregnant mothers and their families, adoptive parents, and parents whose lives have been affected by miscarriage or loss of a child, finding the services provided as a part of the Thriving Texas Families program to include: counseling, mentoring, educational information and resources including classes on pregnancy, parenting, adoption, life skills and employment preparedness; material assistance covering basic needs, such as car seats, clothing, diapers, and formula; care coordination help through referrals to government assistance programs and other social services programs; call center for information and appointment scheduling; and housing and support services through maternity homes, and finding that the program is available to any Texas resident who is: a pregnant woman; the biological father of an unborn child; the biological parent of a child who is 36 months of age or younger; an adoptive parent of an unborn child; an approved adoptive parent of

an unborn child; a former participant who has experienced the loss of a child; a parent or legal guardian of a pregnant minor who is a program client; the parent, legal guardian, or adult caregiver of a child who is 36 months of age or younger; and a parent who experienced a miscarriage or loss of a child not more than 90 days before the parent begins participation in the services offered through the program. *See* Tex. Health and Safety Code § 54.004. More information about how one can benefit from these services made possible by the Thriving Texas Families Program can be found at the *Texas Pregnancy Care Network* website at www.texaspregnancy.org or *The Pregnancy Network* website operated by Human Coalition at www.thepregnancynetwork.clinic.

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that the United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, No. 19-1392, correctly overruled the Court's lawless and unconstitutional pronouncements in *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973), and *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833 (1992), which had invented and perpetuated a supposed constitutional right to abortion that cannot be found anywhere in the language of the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that the ruling in *Dobbs* restores the prerogatives of state and local governments to regulate and prohibit abortion as they see fit; and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that in the 86th Legislative Session, the State of Texas prohibited any political subdivision of the State of Texas, including Rains County, from using taxpayer dollars to fund any abortion provider or any affiliate of an abortion provider. In the prohibition the State Legislature made clear that the law may not be construed to restrict a municipality or county from prohibiting abortion. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 2273.005. ("This chapter may not be construed to restrict a municipality or county from prohibiting abortion."); and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that in the 87th Legislative Session, the State of Texas explicitly allowed municipalities and political subdivisions to outlaw and prohibit abortion, and to establish penalties and remedies against those who perform or enable unlawful abortions. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 311.036(b) ("A statute may not be construed to restrict a political subdivision from regulating or prohibiting abortion in a manner that is at least as stringent as the laws of this state unless the statute explicitly states that political subdivisions are prohibited from regulating or prohibiting abortion in the manner described by the statute."); and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that federal law imposes felony criminal liability on every person who ships or receives abortion pills or abortion-related paraphernalia in interstate or foreign commerce, *see* 18 U.S.C. §§ 1461–62, and all such acts are predicate offenses under the federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), *see* 18 U.S.C. § 1961; and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that the members of the county commission are bound by oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, and that the statutory provisions codified at 18 U.S.C. §§ 1461–62 are the "supreme Law of the Land" under Article VI of the Constitution and must be obeyed and respected by every person within Rains County. *See* U.S. Const. art. VI ("[T]he Laws of the United States . . . shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding."); and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court finds that in order to protect the health and welfare of all residents within the unincorporated area of Rains County, including the unborn, and to ensure the federal prohibitions on the shipment of abortion pills and abortion-related paraphernalia are obeyed, that an ordinance can and should be passed impacting the unincorporated area of Rains County. *See* Tex. Gov't Code § 2273.005 *and* Tex. Gov't Code § 311.036(b); and

WHEREAS, the Rains County Commissioners' Court recognizes their ordinance as only covering the unincorporated area of the county, any incorporated municipality within Rains County wishing to have similar protections for unborn children should make sure their cities have ordinances covering the area within their city limits - as allowed by state law. *See* Tex. Local Gov't Code § 54.001(b)(1); Tex. Gov't Code § 2273.005; *and* Tex. Gov't Code § 311.036(b).

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS:

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

A. PURPOSE AND INTENT

- (1) The purpose of this Ordinance is to prohibit abortion and abortion-inducing drugs in the unincorporated area of Rains County and to make itself expressly clear that Rains County has every intention to stand in full compliance with the state and federal laws on abortion which Rains County is obligated to abide by.
- (2) To protect public health, safety, and/or welfare, the provisions herein are to be recognized and enforced to their full extent.

B. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The intent of the Rains County Commissioners Court is that this ordinance is well within our authority and in full agreement with Texas Government Code § 2273.005 *and* Texas Government Code § 311.036(b).

C. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this ordinance, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) "Abortion" means the act of using, prescribing, administering, procuring, or selling of any instrument, medicine, drug, or any other substance, device, or means with the purpose to terminate the pregnancy of a woman, with knowledge that the termination by any of those means will with reasonable likelihood cause the death of an unborn child.

The term does not include:

- (A) In vitro fertilization or fertility treatments of any type;
- (B) The use, prescription, administration, procuring, or selling of Plan B, morning-after pills, intrauterine devices, or any other type of contraception or emergency contraception; or
- (C) An act performed with the purpose to:

- (i) Save the life or preserve the health of the unborn child;
- (ii) Remove a dead unborn child caused by spontaneous abortion; or
- (iii) Remove an ectopic pregnancy, the implantation of a fertilized egg or embryo outside of the uterus.

(2) “Abortion-inducing drugs” includes mifepristone, misoprostol, and any drug or medication that is used to terminate the life of an unborn child. The term does not include:

(A) Plan B, morning-after pills, intrauterine devices, or any other type of contraception or emergency contraception; or

(B) Drugs or medications that are possessed or distributed for a purpose that does not include the termination of a pregnancy, such as misoprostol that is possessed or distributed for the purpose of treating stomach ulcers.

(3) “Abortion doula services” include acts that aid or abet abortions by providing informational, logistical, emotional, or physical support that would make someone an accomplice to abortion under the principles of complicity set forth in section 7.02 of the Texas Penal Code. The term does not include:

(A) The provision of truthful information regarding the availability of abortion services that are legally permitted under the law of the jurisdiction in which they offered; or

(B) The provision of emotional support to a woman who has completed an abortion.

(4) “Abortion fund” means a corporation, organization, government or governmental subdivision or agency, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, association, or any other legal entity that exists for the purpose of aiding or abetting elective abortions, and that pays for, reimburses, or subsidizes in any way the costs associated with obtaining an elective abortion.

(5) “Abortion provider” means a person, corporation, organization, government or governmental subdivision or agency, business trust, estate, trust, partnership, association, or any other legal entity that performs elective abortions.

(6) “Affiliate” means a person or entity who enters into with another person or entity a legal relationship created or governed by at least one written instrument, including a certificate of formation, a franchise agreement, standards of affiliation, bylaws, or a license, that demonstrates:

(A) common ownership, management, or control between the parties to the relationship;

(B) a franchise granted by the person or entity to the affiliate; or

(C) the granting or extension of a license or other agreement authorizing the affiliate to use the other person’s or entity’s brand name, trademark, service mark, or other registered identification mark.

(7) “Conduct that aids or abets an elective abortion” includes but is not limited to, the following acts:

- (A) Providing transportation to or from an abortion provider;
- (B) Giving instructions over the telephone, the internet, or any other medium of communication regarding self-administered abortion or self-managed abortion or the means of obtaining elective abortions, regardless of where the person giving the instructions is located;
- (C) Creating, editing, uploading, publishing, hosting, maintaining, or registering a domain name for a website, platform, or other interactive computer service that assists or facilitates efforts to obtain elective abortions;
- (D) Creating, editing, programming, or distributing any application or software for use on a computer or electronic device that is intended to enable individuals to obtain elective abortions or to facilitate access to such abortions;
- (E) Offering or providing money, digital currency, or other resources with the knowledge that it will be used to pay for, offset, or reimburse the costs of an abortion or the costs associated with procuring an abortion, including any type of donation to an abortion provider or abortion fund that performs or aids or abets abortions;
- (F) Offering, providing, or lending money, digital currency, resources, or any other thing of value to an abortion provider, an abortion fund, or an affiliate of an abortion provider or abortion fund;
- (G) Performing or providing any type of work or services for an abortion provider or abortion fund, regardless of whether such work or services is done on a paid, contract, or volunteer basis;
- (H) Paying, offering to pay, or providing insurance that covers the legal expenses or court judgments or settlements of those who perform or assist elective abortions;
- (I) Providing or arranging for insurance coverage of an elective abortion;
- (J) Offering or providing “abortion doula” services for an elective abortion;
- (K) Providing referrals to an abortion provider for a woman seeking an elective abortion;
- (L) Coercing or pressuring a pregnant woman to have an abortion against her will; and
- (M) Engaging in any conduct that would make one an accomplice to an elective abortion under the principles of complicity set forth in section 7.02 of the Texas Penal Code.

(8) “County” shall mean the county of Rains County, Texas.

(9) “Elective abortion” means any abortion that is not performed or induced in response to a medical emergency.

(10) “Fertilization” means the fusion of a human spermatozoon with a human ovum.

(11) “Governmental entity” means this state, a state agency in the executive, judicial, or legislative branch of state government, or a political subdivision of this state.

(12) “Human being” means an individual member of the species *Homo sapiens* at any stage of development beginning at fertilization;

(13) “Interactive computer service” means any information service, system, or access software provider that provides or enables computer access by multiple users to a computer server, including specifically a service or system that provides access to the Internet and such systems operated or services offered by libraries or educational institutions.

(14) “Medical emergency” means a life-threatening physical condition aggravated by, caused by, or arising from a pregnancy that, as certified by a physician, places the woman in danger of death or a serious risk of substantial impairment of a major bodily function unless an abortion is performed.

(15) “Unborn child” means an individual organism of the species *Homo sapiens* in any stage of gestation from fertilization until live birth;

(16) “Woman” and “women” include (but are not limited to) any person whose biological sex is female, including any person with XX chromosomes and any person with a uterus, regardless of any gender identity that the person may attempt to assert or claim.

SECTION 2: UNLAWFUL ACTIONS

A. ABORTION PROHIBITED WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to procure or perform an elective abortion of any type and at any stage of pregnancy in the unincorporated area of Rains County, Texas. The prohibition in this section extends to drug-induced abortions in which any portion of the drug regimen is ingested in the unincorporated area of Rains County, Texas, and it applies regardless of where the person who performs or procures the abortion is located.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly engage in conduct that aids or abets an elective abortion if the abortion is performed in violation of subsection (a), regardless of whether the person knew that the elective abortion would be performed in violation of subsection (a).

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, subsections (a) and (b) do not prohibit:

(1) abortions performed or induced in response to a medical emergency, or any conduct that aids or abets or attempts to aid or abet such abortions;

(2) speech or conduct protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, as made applicable to the states through the Supreme Court of the United States’ interpretations of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, or by article 1, section 8 of the Texas Constitution;

(3) conduct that Rains County is forbidden to regulate under federal law or the Constitution of the United States;

(4) conduct taken by a pregnant woman who aborts or seeks to abort her unborn child;

(5) The provision of basic public services, including fire and police protection and utilities, by a governmental entity or a common carrier to an abortion provider, an abortion fund, or an affiliate of an abortion provider or abortion fund in the same manner as the entity provides those services to the general public;

(6) conduct taken at the behest of federal agencies, contractors, or employees that are carrying out duties under federal law, if a prohibition on that conduct would violate the doctrines of preemption or intergovernmental immunity.

(7) any speech or conduct of a pregnancy resource center that does not offer abortions or provide abortion referrals or abortion-doula services, which is made in the context of providing counseling to a pregnant woman who seeks their services.

(d) Under no circumstance may the mother of the unborn child that has been aborted, or the pregnant woman who seeks to abort her unborn child, be subject to prosecution or penalty under this section.

(e) Notwithstanding any other law, the requirements of this section shall be enforced exclusively through the private civil actions described in Section 2G. No direct or indirect enforcement of this section may be taken or threatened by Rains County, or by any officer or employee of this county, by any means whatsoever, and no violation of this section may be used to justify or trigger the enforcement of any other law or any type of adverse consequence under any other law, except as provided in Section 2G. This section does not preclude or limit the enforcement of any other law or regulation against conduct that is independently prohibited by such other law or regulation, and that would remain prohibited by such other law or regulation in the absence of this section.

B. ABORTIONS PERFORMED ON RESIDENTS OF THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS

(a) It is the policy of Rains County to protect its unborn residents in the unincorporated area of our county from individuals and organizations that aid or abet the killing of unborn children, and to protect the unborn from those who seek to kill or otherwise harm them, to the maximum extent permissible under state and federal law. The prohibitions in this section and chapter shall apply extraterritorially to the maximum extent permitted by the Constitution of the United States and the Texas Constitution.

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (c), it shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly perform an elective abortion or knowingly engage in conduct that aids or abets an elective abortion if the abortion is performed on a resident of the unincorporated area of Rains County, regardless of the location of the abortion, regardless of the law in the jurisdiction where the abortion occurred, and regardless of whether the person knew or should have known that the abortion was performed or induced on a resident of the unincorporated area of Rains County.

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, subsection (b) does not prohibit:

(1) abortions performed or induced in response to a medical emergency, or any conduct that aids or abets or attempts to aid or abet such abortions;

(2) speech or conduct protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, as made applicable to the states through the Supreme Court of the United States' interpretations of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, or by article 1, section 8 of the Texas Constitution;

- (3) conduct that Rains County is forbidden to regulate under federal law or the Constitution of the United States;
- (4) conduct taken by a pregnant woman who aborts or seeks to abort her unborn child;
- (5) The provision of basic public services, including fire and police protection and utilities, by a governmental entity or a common carrier to an abortion provider, an abortion fund, or an affiliate of an abortion provider or abortion fund in the same manner as the entity provides those services to the general public; and
- (6) conduct taken at the behest of federal agencies, contractors, or employees that are carrying out duties under federal law, if a prohibition on that conduct would violate the doctrines of preemption or intergovernmental immunity.
- (7) any speech or conduct of a pregnancy resource center that does not offer abortions or provide abortion referrals or abortion-doula services, which is made in the context of providing counseling to a pregnant woman who seeks their services.

(d) Notwithstanding any other law, the requirements of this section shall be enforced exclusively through the private civil actions described in Section 2G. No direct or indirect enforcement of this section may be taken or threatened by Rains County, or by any officer or employee of this county, by any means whatsoever, and no violation of this section may be used to justify or trigger the enforcement of any other law or any type of adverse consequence under any other law, except as provided in Section 2G. This section does not preclude or limit the enforcement of any other law or regulation against conduct that is independently prohibited by such other law or regulation, and that would remain prohibited by such other law or regulation in the absence of this section.

C. ABORTION-INDUCING DRUGS PROHIBITED WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS

(a) Except as provided by subsection (b), it shall be unlawful for any person to:

- (1) Manufacture, possess, or distribute abortion-inducing drugs in the unincorporated area of Rains County;
- (2) Mail, transport, deliver, or provide abortion-inducing drugs in any manner to or from any person or location in the unincorporated area of Rains County;
- (3) Engage in any conduct that would make one an accomplice to the conduct described in subsections (a)(1) and (a)(2) under the principles of complicity set forth in section 7.02 of the Texas Penal Code.

(b) Notwithstanding any other law, subsection (a) does not prohibit:

- (1) speech or conduct protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, as made applicable to the states through the Supreme Court of the United States' interpretations of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, or by article 1, section 8 of the Texas Constitution;
- (2) conduct that Rains County is forbidden to regulate under federal or state law;
- (3) conduct taken by a pregnant woman who aborts or seeks to abort her unborn child;

- (4) the possession, distribution, mailing, transporting, delivery, or provision of abortion-inducing drugs for a purpose that does not include termination of a pregnancy;
- (5) the possession of abortion-inducing drugs resulting from an effort to entrap individuals or entities that violate this section; and
- (6) conduct taken at the behest of federal agencies, contractors, or employees that are carrying out duties under federal law, if a prohibition on that conduct would violate the doctrines of preemption or intergovernmental immunity.

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, the requirements of this section shall be enforced exclusively through the private civil actions described in Section 2G. No direct or indirect enforcement of this section may be taken or threatened by Rains County, or by any officer or employee of this county, by any means whatsoever, and no violation of this section may be used to justify or trigger the enforcement of any other law or any type of adverse consequence under any other law, except as provided in Section 2G. This section does not preclude or limit the enforcement of any other law or regulation against conduct that is independently prohibited by such other law or regulation, and that would remain prohibited by such other law or regulation in the absence of this section.

D. PROHIBITED ABORTION TRAFFICKING WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS

(a) Except as provided by subsection (c), it shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly transport any individual for the purpose of providing or obtaining an elective abortion, regardless of where the elective abortion will occur. This section shall apply only if the transportation of such individual begins, ends, or passes through the unincorporated area of Rains County.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly aid or abet the conduct described in subsection (a). The prohibition in this section includes, but is not limited to, the following acts:

- (1) Offering, providing, or lending money, digital currency, or other resources with the knowledge that it will be used to pay for, offset, or reimburse the costs of transportation prohibited by subsection (a); and
- (2) Engaging in any conduct that would make one an accomplice to a violation of subsection (a) under the principles of complicity set forth in section 7.02 of the Texas Penal Code.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this section shall not apply to:

- (1) speech or conduct protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, as made applicable to the states through the Supreme Court of the United States' interpretations of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, or by Article 1, Section 8 of the Texas Constitution;
- (2) conduct that Rains County is forbidden to regulate under federal or state law;
- (3) conduct taken by a pregnant woman who aborts or seeks to abort her unborn child, or who travels for the purpose of aborting her unborn child; and
- (4) conduct taken at the behest of federal agencies, contractors, or employees that are carrying out duties under federal law, if a prohibition on that conduct would violate the doctrines of preemption or intergovernmental immunity.

(d) Under no circumstance may the mother of the unborn child that has been aborted, or the pregnant woman who seeks to abort her unborn child, be subject to prosecution or penalty or civil liability under this section.

(e) Notwithstanding any other law, the requirements of this section shall be enforced exclusively through the private civil actions described in Section 2G. No direct or indirect enforcement of this section may be taken or threatened by Rains County, or by any officer or employee of this county, by any means whatsoever, and no violation of this section may be used to justify or trigger the enforcement of any other law or any type of adverse consequence under any other law, except as provided in Section 2G. This section does not preclude or limit the enforcement of any other law or regulation against conduct that is independently prohibited by such other law or regulation, and that would remain prohibited by such other law or regulation in the absence of this section.

E. DISPOSAL OF THE REMAINS OF AN UNBORN CHILD WITHIN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to transport the remains of an unborn child who was killed by an elective abortion from any abortion provider into the unincorporated area of Rains County, or to dispose of such remains within the unincorporated area of Rains County.

(b) Under no circumstance may the mother of the unborn child that has been aborted, be subject to prosecution or penalty or civil liability under this section.

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, the requirements of this section shall be enforced exclusively through the private civil actions described in Section 2G. No direct or indirect enforcement of this section may be taken or threatened by Rains County, or by any officer or employee of this county, by any means whatsoever, and no violation of this section may be used to justify or trigger the enforcement of any other law or any type of adverse consequence under any other law, except as provided in Section 2G. This section does not preclude or limit the enforcement of any other law or regulation against conduct that is independently prohibited by such other law or regulation, and that would remain prohibited by such other law or regulation in the absence of this section.

F. CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS PROHIBITED FROM OPERATING OR DOING BUSINESS IN RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS

(a) The following entities are declared to be criminal organizations:

(1) Any organization that, with the intent to aid or abet an elective abortion, violates 18 U.S.C. § 1461 by using the mails for the mailing, carriage in the mails, or delivery of:

(A) Any article or thing designed, adapted, or intended for producing abortion; or

(B) Any article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing which is advertised or described in a manner calculated to lead another to use or apply it for producing abortion;

(2) Any organization that, with the intent to aid or abet an elective abortion, violates 18 U.S.C. § 1462 by:

(A) Using any express company or other common carrier or interactive computer service for carriage in interstate or foreign commerce of any drug, medicine, article, or thing designed, adapted, or intended for producing abortion;

(B) Knowingly taking or receiving, from such express company or other common carrier or interactive computer service, any matter or thing described in subsection (a)(2)(A).

(3) Any organization that violates the enacted abortion statutes of any state or local jurisdiction, regardless of whether the statutes or the enforcement of those statutes have been enjoined or declared unconstitutional by a court; and

(4) Any affiliate of an organization described in Subparagraphs (1) or (2) or (3).

(b) It shall be unlawful for any criminal organization described in subsection (a) to operate or do business in Rains County.

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, the requirements of this section shall be enforced exclusively through the private civil actions described in Section 2G. No direct or indirect enforcement of this section may be taken or threatened by Rains County, or by any officer or employee of this county, by any means whatsoever, and no violation of this section may be used to justify or trigger the enforcement of any other law or any type of adverse consequence under any other law, except as provided in Section 2G. This section does not preclude or limit the enforcement of any other law or regulation against conduct that is independently prohibited by such other law or regulation, and that would remain prohibited by such other law or regulation in the absence of this section.

G. PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION

(a) Any person, other than Rains County, and any officer or employee of the county, has standing to bring and may bring a civil action against any person or entity that:

(1) violates any provision of Section 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, or 2F; or

(2) intends to violate any provision of Section 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, or 2F.

PROVIDED, that no lawsuit may be brought under this section against a provider or user of an interactive computer service if such a lawsuit would be preempted by 47 U.S.C. § 230(c).

(b) If a claimant prevails in an action brought under this section, the court shall award:

(1) injunctive relief sufficient to prevent the defendant from violating Section 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, or 2F.

(2) nominal and compensatory damages if the plaintiff has suffered injury or harm from the defendant's conduct, including but not limited to loss of consortium and emotional distress;

(3) statutory damages in an amount of not less than \$10,000 for each violation of Section 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, or 2F; and

(4) costs and attorney's fees.

(c) Notwithstanding Subsection (b), a court may not award relief under Subsection (b)(3) or (b)(4) in response to a violation of Subsection (a)(1) if the defendant demonstrates that a court

has already ordered the defendant to pay the full amount of statutory damages under Subsection (b)(3) in another action for that particular violation of Section 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, or 2F.

(d) Notwithstanding any other law, a person may bring an action under this section not later than the sixth anniversary of the date the cause of action accrues.

(e) Notwithstanding any other law, the following are not a defense to an action brought under this section:

- (1) ignorance or mistake of law;
- (2) a defendant's belief that the requirements or provisions of this ordinance are unconstitutional or were unconstitutional;
- (3) a defendant's reliance on any court decision that has been vacated, reversed, or overruled on appeal or by a subsequent court, even if that court decision had not been vacated, reversed, or overruled when the cause of action accrued;
- (4) a defendant's reliance on any state or federal court decision that is not binding on the court in which the action has been brought;
- (5) a defendant's reliance on any federal statute, agency rule or action, or treaty that has been repealed, superseded, or declared invalid or unconstitutional, even if that federal statute, agency rule or action, or treaty had not been repealed, superseded, or declared invalid or unconstitutional when the cause of action accrued;
- (6) non-mutual issue preclusion or non-mutual claim preclusion;
- (7) the consent of the plaintiff or the unborn child's mother to the abortion;
- (8) contributory or comparative negligence;
- (9) assumption of risk; and
- (10) any claim that the enforcement of this chapter or the imposition of civil liability against the defendant will violate the constitutional rights of third parties, except as provided by Section 2H.

(f) It is an affirmative defense if a person sued under this section:

- (1) was unaware that it was engaged in conduct described in Section 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, or 2F; and
- (2) took every reasonable precaution to ensure that it would not violate Section 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, or 2F.

The defendant has the burden of proving an affirmative defense under this Subsection by a preponderance of the evidence.

(g) This section may not be construed to impose liability on any speech or conduct protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, as made applicable to the states through the United States Supreme Court's interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, or by article 1, section 8 of the Texas Constitution.

(h) Notwithstanding any other law, neither Rains County, nor any officer or employee of Rains County may:

- (1) act in concert or participation with anyone who brings suit under this section;
- (2) establish or attempt to establish any type of agency or fiduciary relationship with a person who brings suit under this section;
- (3) make any attempt to control or influence a person's decision to bring suit under this section or that person's conduct of the litigation; or
- (4) intervene in any action brought under this section.

This subsection does not prohibit a person or entity described by this subsection from filing an amicus curiae brief in the action, so long as that person or entity does not act in concert or participation with the plaintiff or plaintiffs who sue under this section or violate any provision of Subsection (h)(1)–(4).

(i) Notwithstanding any other law, a court may not award costs or attorneys' fees to a litigant who is sued under this section.

(j) Notwithstanding any other law, a civil action under this section may not be brought:

- (1) against the woman upon whom the abortion was performed or induced or attempted to be performed or induced in violation of this ordinance, or against a pregnant woman who intends or seeks to abort her unborn child in violation of this ordinance;
- (2) against any person or entity that performs, aids or abets, or attempts or intends to perform or aid or abet an abortion at the behest of federal agencies, contractors, or employees that are carrying out duties under federal law, if a prohibition on that abortion would violate the doctrines of preemption or intergovernmental immunity;
- (3) against any common carrier that transports a pregnant woman to an abortion provider, if the common carrier is unaware that the woman intends to abort her unborn child; or
- (4) by any person who impregnated a woman seeking an abortion through an act of rape, sexual assault, or incest, or by anyone who acts in concert or participation with such a person.

(k) Notwithstanding any other law, a civil action under this section may be brought only in the district courts of the state of Texas and may not be considered by any municipal or county court.

H. AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

(a) A defendant against whom an action is brought under Section 2G may assert an affirmative defense to liability under this section if:

- (1) the imposition of civil liability on the defendant will violate constitutional or federally protected rights that belong to the defendant personally; or
- (2) the defendant
 - (A) has standing to assert the rights of a third party under the tests for third-party standing established by the Supreme Court of the United States; and
 - (B) demonstrates that the imposition of civil liability on the defendant will violate constitutional or federally protected rights belonging to that third party.

The defendant shall bear the burden of proving the affirmative defense in Subsection (a) by a preponderance of the evidence.

(b) Nothing in this section or chapter shall limit or preclude a defendant from asserting the unconstitutionality of any provision or application of this chapter as a defense to liability under Section 2G, or from asserting any other defense that might be available under any other source of law.

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, no court may apply the law of another state or jurisdiction to any civil action brought under Section 2G, unless article VI of the Constitution of the United States or the constitution or laws of the State of Texas compels it to do so.

SECTION 3: SEVERABILITY

A. SEVERABILITY

(a) Mindful of *Leavitt v. Jane L.*, 518 U.S. 137 (1996), in which in the context of determining the severability of a state statute regulating abortion the Supreme Court of the United States held that an explicit statement of legislative intent is controlling, it is the intent of the county that every provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word in this chapter, and every application of the provisions in this chapter to every person, group of persons, or circumstances, are severable from each other.

(b) If any application of any provision in this chapter to any person, group of persons, or circumstances is found by a court to be invalid, preempted, or unconstitutional, for any reason whatsoever, then the remaining applications of that provision to all other persons and circumstances shall be severed and preserved, and shall remain in effect. All constitutionally valid applications of the provisions in this chapter shall be severed from any applications that a court finds to be invalid, preempted, unconstitutional, because it is the county's intent and priority that every single valid application of every provision in this chapter be allowed to stand alone.

(c) The county further declares that it would have enacted this chapter, and each provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word, and all constitutional applications of the provisions of this chapter, irrespective of the fact that any provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word, or applications of this chapter were to be declared invalid, preempted, or unconstitutional.

(d) If any provision of this chapter is found by any court to be unconstitutionally vague, then the applications of that provision that do not present constitutional vagueness problems shall be severed and remain in force, consistent with the severability requirements of Subsections (a), (b), and (c).

(e) No court may decline to enforce the severability requirements of Subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) on the ground that severance would "rewrite" the ordinance or involve the court in legislative or lawmaking activity. A court that declines to enforce or enjoins a state or county official from enforcing a statute or ordinance is never rewriting a statute or engaging in legislative or lawmaking activity, as the statute or ordinance continues to contain the same words as before the court's decision. A judicial injunction or declaration of unconstitutionality:

(1) is nothing more than an edict prohibiting enforcement that may subsequently be vacated by a later court if that court has a different understanding of the law;

- (2) is not a formal amendment of the language in a statute or ordinance; and
- (3) no more rewrites a statute or ordinance than a decision by the executive not to enforce a duly enacted statute or ordinance in a limited and defined set of circumstances.

(f) If any state or federal court disregards any of the severability requirements in Subsections (a), (b), (c), (d), or (e), and declares or finds any provision of this chapter facially invalid, preempted, or unconstitutional, when there are discrete applications of that provision which can be enforced against a person, group of persons, or circumstances without violating federal or state law, then that provision shall be interpreted, as a matter of county law, as if the county had enacted a provision limited to the persons, group of persons, or circumstances for which the provision's application will not violate federal or state law, and every court shall adopt this saving construction of that provision until the court ruling that pronounced the provision facially invalid, preempted, or unconstitutional is vacated or overruled.

SECTION 4: EFFECTIVE DATE

A. EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall go into immediate effect upon majority vote by the Rains County Commissioners' Court,

PASSED, ADOPTED, SIGNED and APPROVED,

COUNTY SEAL

- _____ County Judge
- _____ Commissioner Precinct 1
- _____ Commissioner Precinct 2
- _____ Commissioner Precinct 3
- _____ Commissioner Precinct 4

ATTEST: _____ Rains County Clerk

FURTHER ATTESTED BY "WE THE PEOPLE", THE CITIZENS and WITNESSES TO THIS PASSAGE OF THIS ORDINANCE, THIS _____ OF _____, THE YEAR OF OUR LORD _____.

WITNESS: _____

WITNESS: _____

**SANCTUARY CITIES
FOR THE UNBORN**

**CITIES WHICH HAVE PASSED ORDINANCES
PROHIBITING ABORTION IN THE U.S. (12-16-25)**

	CITY	POP.	DATE		CITY	POP.	DATE
001.	Waskom, TX	2,190	06-11-19	028.	Poynor, TX	314	05-11-21
002.	Omaha, TX *	1,021	09-09-19	029.	Lebanon, OH	20,529	05-25-21
003.	Naples, TX	1,378	09-09-19	030.	Levelland, TX	14,582	06-07-21
004.	Joaquin, TX	850	09-17-19	031.	Sundown, TX	1,397	06-08-21
005.	Tenaha, TX	1,160	09-23-19	032.	Sterling City, TX	888	06-21-21
006.	Gilmer, TX	5,216	09-24-19	033.	Centerville, TX	892	07-07-21
007.	Westbrook, TX	312	11-18-19	034.	Eastland, TX	3,970	08-04-21
008.	Rusk, TX	5,618	01-09-20	035.	Leona, TX	175	08-09-21
009.	Colorado City, TX	4,146	01-14-20	036.	Crawford, TX	733	08-10-21
010.	Gary, TX	311	01-16-20	037.	Brownsboro, TX	1,036	08-16-21
011.	Big Spring, TX	28,862	01-28-20	038.	Impact, TX	20	09-11-21
012.	Wells, TX	769	02-10-20	039.	Nazareth, TX	311	10-05-21
013.	Whiteface, TX	449	03-12-20	040.	Cisco, TX	3,913	10-12-21
014.	East Mountain, TX	797	07-20-20	041.	Mason, OH *	34,792	10-25-21
015.	New Home, TX	320	09-29-20	042.	Anson, TX	2,556	11-08-21
016.	Morton, TX	1,608	10-12-20	043.	Slaton, TX	6,235	12-13-21
017.	Ackerly, TX	251	12-01-20	044.	Jewett, TX	1,250	02-15-22
018.	Grapeland, TX	1,489	01-25-21	045.	Shallowater, TX	2,613	03-22-22
019.	Goldsmith, TX	257	02-10-21	046.	Pollock, LA	473	03-23-22
020.	Carbon, TX	348	02-22-21	047.	Lindale, TX	6,730	03-24-22
021.	Gorman, TX	1,083	03-04-21	048.	Marquez, TX	313	04-20-22
022.	Murchison, TX	606	03-09-21	049.	Willey, IA	101	05-02-22
023.	Latexo, TX	322	03-15-21	050.	Normangee, TX	778	05-19-22
024.	Hayes Center, NE	288	04-06-21	051.	Stapleton, NE	305	08-10-22
025.	Blue Hill, NE	941	04-13-21	052.	Hobbs, NM	41,604	11-07-22
026.	Lubbock, TX	264,000	05-01-21	053.	Athens, TX	13,121	11-08-22
027.	Abernathy, TX	2,839	05-10-21	054.	Abilene, TX	124,407	11-08-22

	CITY	POP.	DATE		CITY	POP.	DATE
055.	Arnold, NE	597	11-08-22	076.	Hooks, TX	2,769	07-21-25
056.	Paxton, NE	523	11-08-22	077.	Douglassville, TX	228	08-05-25
057.	Brady, NE	428	11-08-22	078.	Como, TX	758	08-07-25
058.	Hershey, NE	665	11-08-22	079.	Talco, TX	492	08-11-25
059.	Wallace, NE	366	11-08-22	080.	Annona, TX	288	08-12-25
060.	San Angelo, TX	101,612	11-08-22	081.	Clyde, TX	4,051	08-12-25
061.	Plainview, TX	22,343	11-08-22	082.	New Boston, TX	4,686	08-19-25
062.	Odessa, TX	125,413	12-13-22	083.	Avery, TX	462	09-25-25
063.	Clovis, NM	38,567	01-05-23	084.	Marietta, TX	115	11-12-25
064.	Little River-Academy, TX	2,048	01-12-23	085.	Wolfforth, TX	9,600	11-17-25
065.	Eunice, NM	3,026	01-23-23	086.	Roaring Springs, TX	219	12-08-25
066.	Edgewood, NM	6,154	04-26-23	087.	Olton, TX	2,288	12-08-25
067.	Danville, IL	28,787	05-02-23	088.	Sudan, TX	958	12-09-25
068.	Midlothian, TX	38,635	02-27-24	089.	Amherst, TX	671	12-09-25
069.	Muenster, TX	1,556	04-08-24	090.	Springlake, TX	145	12-11-25
070.	Ovilla, TX	4,709	12-10-24	091.	Tira, TX	319	12-14-25
071.	Mullin, TX	196	04-08-25				
072.	Moran, TX	285	04-15-25				
073.	Lueders, TX	346	04-18-25				
074.	Avinger, TX	371	04-30-25				
075.	Big Sandy, TX	1,343	05-13-25				

www.sanctuarycitiesfortheunborn.com

* Two city councils recanted their ordinances: (1) Omaha, Texas repealed their ordinance in exchange for a non-binding resolution on 10-14-19, after the ACLU filed an open records request. (2) Mason, Ohio repealed their ordinance on 12-13-21 after new leadership was elected to city council in the 11-02-21 election.

**COUNTIES WHICH HAVE PASSED ORDINANCES
PROHIBITING ABORTION IN THE U.S. (12-16-25)**

	COUNTY	POPULATION	DATE	COVERAGE
01.	Lea County, NM	76,432	12-08-22	Unincorporated
02.	Roosevelt County, NM	19,019	1-10-23	Unincorporated
03.	Mitchell County, TX	9,070	7-14-23	Unincorporated
04.	Goliad County, TX	7,012	8-28-23	Unincorporated
05.	Cochran County, TX	2,547	9-28-23	Unincorporated
06.	Lubbock County, TX	317,561	10-23-23	Unincorporated
07.	Dawson County, TX	12,130	12-18-23	Unincorporated
08.	Jack County, TX	8,875	04-22-24	Unincorporated
09.	Shackelford County, TX	3,105	04-15-25	Unincorporated
10.	Camp County, TX	13,094	04-30-25	Unincorporated
11.	Shelby County, TX	24,192	07-30-25	Unincorporated
12.	Hopkins County, TX	38,784	09-30-25	Unincorporated
13.	Dickens County, TX	1,725	11-10-25	Unincorporated
14.	Howard County, TX	34,860	11-24-25	Unincorporated
15.	Motley County, TX	1,063	12-08-25	Unincorporated
16.	Crosby County, TX	5,133	12-15-25	Unincorporated

MITCHELL LAW

Jonathan F. Mitchell
Mitchell Law PLLC
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Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 686-3940 tel
(512) 686-3941 fax
jonathan@mitchell.law

December 16, 2025

Rains County Commission
Rains County Courthouse
167 Quitman Street
Emory, Texas 75440

PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Commissioners:

I understand that the Rains County Commission is considering whether to enact an ordinance declaring Rains County a sanctuary county for the unborn, an ordinance similar to those passed in 14 counties and 74 cities across the State of Texas.

I commit to you that Mitchell Law PLLC will represent Rains County, at no cost to the county or its taxpayers, in any litigation that results from a decision to enact this ordinance provided by Mark Lee Dickson.

Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan F. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jonathan F. Mitchell
Mitchell Law PLLC



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AUSTIN

August 21, 2023

To: Texas City Councils, County Commissions, and Local Officials

During the 2019 Legislative Session, a bill was passed (Senate Bill 22) which prohibited tax dollars from funding abortion providers and their affiliates at the state and local level and included an amendment specifically clarifying that the bill does not prohibit cities and counties from banning abortion. Taking their cue from this amendment, on June 11, 2019, the City Council of Waskom, Texas, passed an ordinance banning all abortions within their city limits and prohibiting any abortion provider from doing business within the town's jurisdiction.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature made it even more clear that cities and counties could pass ordinances outlawing abortion when they passed Senate Bill 8 - also known as the Texas Heartbeat Act. This bill prohibited an abortion being performed on any child which is found to have a detectable heartbeat, but also included a section addressing the authority cities and counties have at prohibiting abortion in their jurisdiction. The law states in Texas Government Code § 311.036(b), "A statute may not be construed to restrict a political subdivision from regulating or prohibiting abortion in a manner that is at least as stringent as the laws of this state unless the statute explicitly states that political subdivisions are prohibited from regulating or prohibiting abortion in the manner described by the statute."

Currently there are over 50 political subdivisions in Texas which have passed local ordinances prohibiting abortion within their jurisdictions. As elected officials who voted for state legislation allowing these local actions, we are thrilled to see this wave of pro-life action at the local level and hope to see these ordinances continue to spread across our state – *even in a post-Roe Texas*. While it is true that abortion is outlawed in the entire State of Texas, from the point of conception, our work is far from over. Right now, throughout the State of Texas, women are being trafficked across our borders by abortion traffickers funded by abortion trafficking organizations still operating in our state. As a result, these women are being abused and traumatized by abortion across our Texas–New Mexico border and sent back to Texas for our cities and counties to deal with the aftermath taking place in our homes, our schools, our churches, and our hospitals. The Sanctuary for the Unborn ordinances seek to protect these institutions by putting safeguards in place to protect men, women, and their children for years to come. These ordinances, which seek to close as many loopholes as possible, do not penalize women who seek or undergo abortions, but places the penalty on the party who most deserves it -- the abortionist and the industry profiting from the unjust procedure, *including abortion traffickers*.

While we intend to do our part to keep our strong pro-life protections for mothers and their unborn children, we believe it will help for cities and counties to do their part as well. As state elected officials who are trusted by Pro-Life Texans to stand for life at every available opportunity, we believe this is a viable

and crucial opportunity for local governments to protect their most vulnerable members. We look forward to partnering with you as we seek to defend innocent human life at every level of government.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, respectfully encourage local government officials to do their part in the passage of ordinances outlawing abortion and abortion trafficking and declaring their cities and counties *Sanctuaries for the Unborn*.

Thank you for your consideration.

Signed,



Dustin Burrows
State Representative, House District 83



Carl Tepper
State Representative, House District 84



Charles Perry
State Senator, Senate District 28



Jeff Leach
State Representative, House District 67



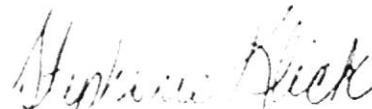
Briscoe Cain
State Representative, House District 128



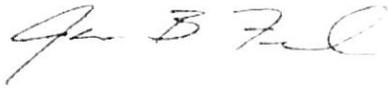
Jared Patterson
State Representative, House District 106



Greg Bonnen, M.D.
State Representative, House District 24



Stephanie Klick
State Representative, House District 91



James Frank

State Representative, House District 69



Cole Hefner

State Representative, House District 5



Bryan Hughes

State Senator, District 1



Mark Dorazio

State Representative, District 122



Tan Parker

State Senator, District 12



Donna Campbell, M.D.

State Senator, District 25



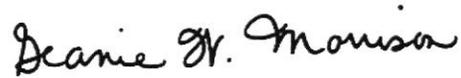
Ellen Troxclair

State Representative, House District 19



Mayes Middleton

State Senator, Senate District 11



Geanie W. Morrison

State Representative, District 30



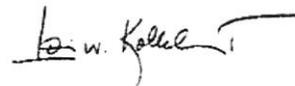
Matt Schaefer

State Representative, District 6



Carrie Isaac

State Representative, District 73



Lois W. Kolkhorst

State Senator, District 18

VOTERS IN RAINS COUNTY, TX, THE PRO-LIFE ISSUE, & SCFTU ORDINANCES (12-16-25)

How pro-life are voters in Rains County? During the 2018 Republican Party Primary, voters in the Republican Party Primary had the opportunity to vote on proposition #7. This proposition gave voters the chance to voice their opinion if they were "In Favor" or "Against" the following statement: *"I believe abortion should be abolished in Texas."* In Rains County, out of 1,469 votes, 75.56% (1,110) voted in favor of the pro-life proposition while 24.44% (359) voted against the pro-life proposition.



During the 2022 Republican Party Primary, voters in the Republican Party Primary had the opportunity to vote on proposition #5. This proposition gave voters the chance to voice their opinion if they were "In Favor" or "Against" the following statement: *"Texas should enact a state constitutional amendment to defend the sanctity of innocent human life, created in the image of God, from fertilization until natural death."* The percentage of the pro-life vote was even greater in Rains County than two years prior. **In Rains County, out of 1,843 votes, 89.63% (1,652) voted in favor of the pro-life proposition while 10.36% (191) voted against the pro-life proposition.**

While Democrats did not entertain such propositions in their primaries, Kristen Day, who serves as the Executive Director with *Democrats for Life of America* has shared, *"One out of every three Democrats support reasonable regulation of and limits on abortion. We support the county's right to protect preborn life and we urge all pro-life Democrats to support similar initiatives to protect life and truly empower women."*

Sanctuary Cities for the Unborn Since June 11, 2019, a total of 91 cities and 16 counties across seven different states have passed local ordinances going as far as they can to prohibit abortion within their jurisdiction. 74 of these cities and 14 of these counties are in the State of Texas. Cities in Rains County that could pass a Sanctuary City for the Unborn Ordinance include: Emory (pop. 1,600), Point (pop. 1,050), East Tawakoni (pop. 883), and Alba (pop. 502). Rains County (pop. 12,164) could also pass a 'Sanctuary County for the Unborn' ordinance covering the unincorporated area of Rains County.

The Republican Party of Texas 2024 Party Platform and Sanctuary for the Unborn Ordinances
Several provisions found in Sanctuary for the Unborn Ordinances are in full alignment with pro-life planks found in the Republican Party of Texas 2024 Party Platform.

Plank #194(l). Pro-Life: Abortion is not healthcare, it is homicide. Until the abolition of abortion is achieved, we support laws that restrict and regulate abortion, including but not limited to . . . Supporting the right of Texas municipalities to protect mothers and their preborn children in their communities by passing enforceable city ordinances that further ban abortions within their city limits, closing loopholes in state abortion laws.

Plank #194(j). Pro-Life: We support laws . . . Extending the private cause of action used in the Texas Heartbeat Act to all pro-life laws and policies in Texas.

Plank #53. Prohibit Abortion Transportation Across State Lines: We support legislation to prohibit the use of any government funds, as well as the transportation of pregnant women across Texas' state lines, for the purpose of procuring an elective abortion and for the provision of a private right of action against all persons and organizations who aid and abet in the harming of the woman, and the killing of her preborn child.

Plank #142. Preventing Any Death by Abortion: . . . We support protecting preborn children and their mothers by stopping abortion pill distributors from sending and trafficking these lethal and illegal drugs into Texas and holding those accountable who break state Pro-Life laws by selling and trafficking illegal abortion pills.

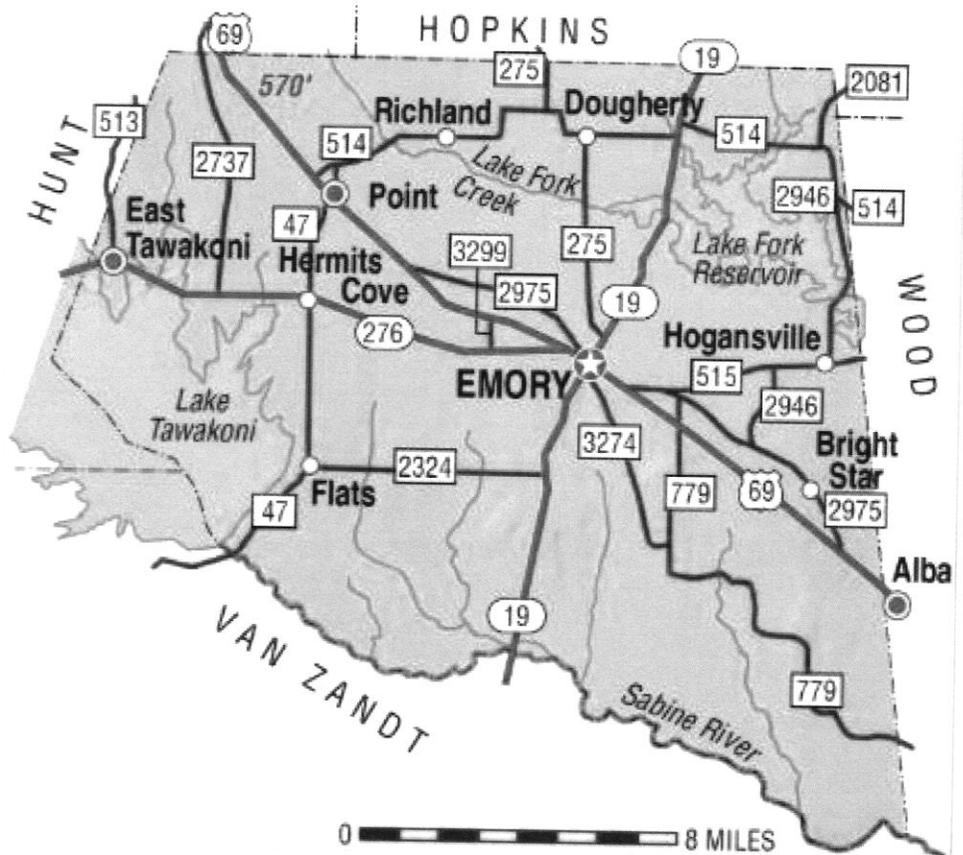
Closest Cities / Counties to Rains County that have passed 'Sanctuary for the Unborn' Ordinances:

<u>Hopkins County</u> (pop. 38,784)	25 min away	Passed Ordinance 09-30-25
<u>Como</u> (pop. 758) in Hopkins	31 min away	Passed Ordinance 08-07-25
<u>Tira</u> (pop. 319) in Hopkins	37 min away	Passed Ordinance 12-14-25
<u>Lindale</u> (pop. 6,730) in Hopkins	37 min away	Passed Ordinance 03-24-22
<u>Big Sandy</u> (pop. 1,343) in Upshur	48 min away	Passed Ordinance 05-13-25
<u>Athens</u> (pop. 13,121) in Henderson	51 min away	Passed Ordinance 11-08-22
<u>Brownsboro</u> (pop. 1,036) in Henderson	53 min away	Passed Ordinance 08-16-21
<u>Camp County</u> (pop. 13,094)	57 min away	Passed Ordinance 04-30-25
<u>Gilmer</u> (pop. 5,216) in Upshur	57 min away	Passed Ordinance 09-24-19

The Texas Legislature On Political Subdivisions Passing Ordinances Outlawing Abortion

During the **86th Legislative Session**, the State of Texas prohibited any political subdivision in the State of Texas from using taxpayer dollars to fund any abortion provider or any affiliate of an abortion provider. In the prohibition the State Legislature made clear that the law may not be construed to restrict a municipality or county from prohibiting abortion. See Tex. Gov't Code § 2273.005. ("This chapter may not be construed to restrict a municipality or county from prohibiting abortion.")

During the **87th Legislative Session**, the State of Texas explicitly allowed municipalities and counties to outlaw and prohibit abortion, and to establish penalties and remedies against those who perform or enable unlawful abortions. See Tex. Gov't Code § 311.036(b) ("A statute may not be construed to restrict a political subdivision from regulating or prohibiting abortion in a manner that is at least as stringent as the laws of this state unless the statute explicitly states that political subdivisions are prohibited from regulating or prohibiting abortion in the manner described by the statute.")



While the Texas Attorney General's Office has stated that cities could always do this (See *Planned Parenthood v. City of Lubbock*, 2021), the passage of this provision in SB 8 (*The Texas Heartbeat Act*) made it explicitly clear that cities and counties had such authority.

In August 2023, 20 Texas Senators and Representatives penned a letter in support of cities and counties passing ordinances outlawing abortion across the State of Texas. The letter read: "Currently there are over 50 political subdivisions in Texas which have passed local ordinances prohibiting abortion within their jurisdictions. As elected officials who voted for state legislation allowing these local actions, we are thrilled to see this wave of pro-life action at the local level and hope to see these ordinances continue to spread across our state - even in a post-Roe Texas. **While it is true that abortion is outlawed in the entire State of Texas, from the point of conception, our work is far from over.** Right now, throughout the State of Texas, women are being trafficked across our borders by abortion traffickers funded by abortion trafficking organizations still operating in our state. As a result, these women are being abused and traumatized by abortion across our Texas-New Mexico border and sent back to Texas for our cities and counties to deal with the aftermath taking place in our homes,

our schools, our churches, and our hospitals. The Sanctuary for the Unborn ordinances seek to protect these institutions by putting safeguards in place to protect men, women, and their children for years to come. **These ordinances, which seek to close as many loopholes as possible, do not penalize women who seek or undergo abortions, but places the penalty on the party who most deserves it - the abortionist and the industry profiting from the unjust procedure, including abortion traffickers.**"

The Problem of Abortion Trafficking

These measures are extremely important because abortion facilities in New Mexico and other states are still committing abortions on Texas residents and are utilizing a variety of abortion trafficking organizations located in Texas to help pregnant mothers get to their state to end the lives of their unborn children. Those groups, involved in abortion trafficking, include: the Lilith Fund, Texas Equal Access (TEA) Fund, and Fund Texas Choice. These organizations provide financial support for Texas residents who are traveling outside the State of Texas for an elective abortion. Abortion trafficking organizations often assist with everything from flights, bus tickets, ride shares, and hotel stays to cash for gas, food, rental car fees, and anything else relating to their abortion travel experience.

In New Mexico and Illinois, abortion trafficking organizations have even helped Texas minors obtain abortions without parental consent.

In addition to the problem of abortion trafficking, there is also the problem of the mailing of abortion-inducing drugs into Texas. Deadly abortion-inducing drugs are being sent to Texas residents from all over the nation, sometimes even from other countries through groups like Aid Access and Plan C. A recent study published by the Ethics and Public Policy Center (EPPC), found that nearly 11% of women (10.93%) experience sepsis, infection, hemorrhaging, or other serious or life-threatening adverse events following a mifepristone abortion."

While abortion trafficking Texas residents outside of our state and abortion-inducing drugs being trafficked into our state are both horrible, the dead bodies of unborn children are also being trafficked into our state by Texas waste management companies and ending up in our local landfills. All of these horrible practices are addressed in Sanctuary County for the Unborn ordinances.

How would the proposed SCFTU Ordinance be enforced? The proposed SCFTU Ordinance would be enforced the same way the Lubbock SCFTU Ordinance, Lubbock County SCFTU Ordinance, and the Texas Heartbeat Act are enforced - through a private right of action allowing private citizens to file a lawsuit against anyone violating the measure. This enforcement mechanism has had much success. Professor Josh Blackman, a law professor at South Texas College of Law Houston, addressed how Lubbock's Sanctuary City for the Unborn ordinance is enforced in a May 5, 2021 article published by *The Texan* titled, "[Lubbock Stakeholders, Lawyers Weigh in on Vague Future of Abortion Ban](#)," Professor Blackman stated:

alamo Alamo Women's Clinic
May 9, 2023 · 🌐

Texas Teens - if you are under 18 and seeking an abortion, there is funding available. Abortions Care and all travel and expenses are FREE. Compassionate, Kind and Discreet staff. No Parental consent is needed in Albuquerque or Illinois. Call us for help.

Texas Teens

If you are under 18 & seeking an abortion, there ARE resources available to cover ALL costs.

Call Now for INFO

“It’s actually a very clever ordinance, the way they’ve devised it. Usually, the way laws work is the government enforces it. So let’s say the city or county puts a restriction on abortion.... With the usual law, when the government enforces it, Planned Parenthood can bring what’s called a pre-enforcement challenge. It says, ‘Well, this law hasn’t been enforced yet, but they will enforce it, and when they do enforce it, we’ll have our rights violated. So we can sue now. This ordinance is different. It specifically says government, the Lubbock government, cannot enforce this law. Cannot. The only people who can enforce this law are private citizens...Why is this fact important? It’s almost impossible to do a pre-enforcement challenge when the government’s not enforcing it. In other words, they can sue the government – which they probably will try to – and the court will say, ‘Well, that’s nice, but the government can’t enforce this law, so what are you suing them for?’ There’s no way for a court to hear the validity of this law until someone actually brings a civil lawsuit.”

Professor Blackman is not the only law professor who has recognized the enforceability of the law. In her book *Roe: The History of a National Obsession*, published by Yale University Press, University of California Davis School of Law professor Mary Ziegler explained, “Generally, federal standing doctrine required not only that someone suffer a real injury at the hands of the defendant but also that a favorable judicial decision could provide some form of redress. When it came to redress, [Jonathan] Mitchell and [Senator Bryan] Hughes relied on a 2001 case called *Okpalobi v. Foster*.” Ziegler continued, “In 1999, Louisiana had passed a law allowing women to sue abortion providers for injuries to their unborn children. When abortion providers challenged the constitutionality of the law, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals concluded that they lacked standing to sue the state because the government and its agents could neither stop private citizens from suing nor block state courts from entertaining suits. Hughes and Mitchell thought the same argument could apply to Waskom: because the sanctuary city ordinance assigned enforcement to private citizens, the city would have no authority to stop private citizens from suing, and courts would hold that any abortion provider hauling the city into court lacked standing to do so.” The success of this law was realized on June 1, 2021, when Lubbock’s Sanctuary City for the Unborn ordinance went into effect and the Lubbock Planned Parenthood complied with the law. Within a matter of hours, Judge James Wesley Hendrix ruled in the City of Lubbock’s favor. Ziegler wrote:

“District judge James Wesley Hendrix, whom Donald Trump had nominated in 2019, agreed with Lubbock that federal courts had no jurisdiction to hear the case because abortion providers lacked standing to sue. ‘Like the defendants in *Okpalobi*,’ Judge Hendrix wrote, ‘the city and its officials have no authority to prevent a private plaintiff from invoking the ordinance or to tell the state courts what cases they may hear.’”

A Few Statements from Elected Officials After their vote, Camp County Judge A.J. Mason shared, “*I am so proud of our commissioners court for the strong position taken on protecting the unborn. I can think of no greater cause to be a part of than defending those who can’t defend themselves. This is a great day.*” Upon hearing the news about the passage of the ordinance in Camp County, State Representative Cole Hefner wrote,

“While I couldn’t be there in person due to session in Austin, I’m incredibly proud to celebrate some powerful news out of Camp County this morning. With a unanimous 5-0 vote, the Commissioners’ Court passed an ordinance officially making Camp County a Sanctuary County for the Unborn – the first in East Texas, the eighth in our state, and the tenth in the entire nation to do so. This bold step not only outlaws abortion within the unincorporated areas of the county, but it also prohibits abortion trafficking and the aiding and abetting of elective abortions—even when those efforts begin or pass through Camp County.”

For more information, visit www.sanctuarycitiesfortheunborn.com. Mark Lee Dickson can be contacted by phone at 806-598-1919, by email at markleedickson@gmail.com, or through his website www.markleedickson.com.



New Mexico State Legislature

STATE CAPITOL
Santa Fe

October 18, 2023

To City Councils, County Commissions, and Local Officials throughout the State of Texas:

Since November 2022, several cities and counties throughout the State of New Mexico have passed "sanctuary for the unborn" ordinances in an attempt to do what is best for their communities. These cities and counties passed these measures in spite of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's demented desire to make New Mexico the abortion capital of America.

Since September 2021, when the Texas Heartbeat Act went into effect, we have seen over 1,000 abortions per month come into the State of New Mexico from the State of Texas. Not only has this influx of abortions caused the deaths of many innocent Texans, but it is putting an extreme burden on our limited healthcare system in New Mexico. This may lead to a significant health crisis in the State of New Mexico if reasonable measures are not passed on abortion trafficking within the State of Texas, as our health system cannot handle the significant number of emergencies that are the result of the influx of approximately 11,000 Texas abortions per year. As state legislators we stand concerned about the impact this has on the health, safety, and enjoyment of life of the residents of New Mexico and those who are visiting from the state of Texas.

While the ordinances passed in our cities and counties in New Mexico are different from the ordinances which have been passed in cities and counties throughout Texas, our communities are seeking to do as much as they possibly can to protect our communities under the leadership and the laws of the State of New Mexico. We are doing this despite facing overwhelming opposition from state leaders who are in lock-step with the most pro-abortion administration in the history of America.

Of course, we cannot fight the Biden Administration's radical abortion agenda alone. This is why it is a great encouragement to us that allies across the New Mexico-Texas border are considering proposals which would prohibit abortion trafficking into New Mexico. While we will never stop fighting for unborn life on our turf in New Mexico, the victory is made more achievable when cities and counties in Texas are doing their part to defend innocent human life as well.

Therefore, we, the undersigned, respectfully encourage city and county officials across the State of Texas to further the passage of ordinances outlawing abortion and abortion trafficking within their jurisdictions.

Sincerely,


DAVID M. GALLEGOS
State Senator


GREGG SCHMEDES, M.D.
State Senator


PAT WOODS
State Senator


JAMES G. TOWNSEND
State Representative


JOHN BLOCK
State Representative


JENIFER JONES
State Representative


ANDREA REEB
State Representative