



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## **COMING TO A BALLOT NEAR YOU: WHEN DOES LIFE BEGIN?**

LAWRENCEVILLE, GA – On July 20<sup>th</sup> of this year, the voters in over forty-five Georgia counties, representing all thirteen Congressional Districts, will have an opportunity to answer the pressing question of when life begins. Appearing on the July 20<sup>th</sup> Primary ballot is the following poll, “Do you support an amendment to the Georgia state constitution so as to provide that the paramount right to life is vested in each human being from the earliest biological beginning until natural death?”

Using a little known election law, Georgia Right to Life (GRTL), asked their local chapters to approach both Democrat and Republican Party County Chairman, with the request that they place a “Party question” on their respective ballots. Forty-five Republican Chairmen and one Democratic Chairman (Butts County) responded by requesting their local Election Board to certify the question for the July Primary.

Legally the outcome of the question bears no weight because it is intended to be a straw poll of local county voters on the issue of when life begins. Politically, it will serve as a barometer of local sentiment on the sanctity of life. Based upon Georgia [House Resolution 5](#) (HR 5), sponsored last session by Rep. Martin Scott, the question is asked so that the pro-life strength of each county can be assessed, precinct by precinct. “We have some confusion among some of our elected ‘pro-life’ officials when it comes time to actually fight for --- and support --- meaningful pro-life legislation in the Georgia House” says Mike Griffin, Legislative Director for GRTL, “this will remove all doubt as to where their ‘moral compass’ should point . . . their own constituents will have the opportunity to weigh in on the greatest human rights issue of our day. This has huge political ramifications.”

“Our polling shows that Georgia is one of the most pro-life states in the nation” says Daniel Becker, President of Georgia Right to Life. A poll from Strategic Vision shows that fifty-seven percent of voters favor the overthrow of Roe vs. Wade. This is roughly 20 points above the next nearest state polled. “This fact does not seem to be lost on our elected officials, particularly, as they consider running for a statewide office”, says Becker. “During the 2008 Presidential primary, Georgia’s Republican voters selected the most pro-life candidate in the entire field, Gov. Mike Huckabee” said Becker. Huckabee was the only viable candidate that endorsed a Personhood Amendment at the state

constitutional level which would define when life begins and when it should be protected by law. "As of today, all six of the Republican front-runners for Governor have endorsed a Personhood Amendment to the Georgia Constitution," said Melanie Crozier, PAC Director for GRTL. "These include Senator Jeff Chapman, Congressman Nathan Deal, Senator Eric Johnson, Mr. Ray McBerry and Commissioner John Oxendine. Former Secretary of State, Karen Handel, while not endorsed by GRTL because of her opposition to pro-life positions, still maintains her support of a Personhood Amendment." says Crozier.

Opposition to the question has arisen regarding the concern that it would outlaw capital punishment, contraceptives or implementation of advanced directives. HR 5 very specifically addresses these concerns:

H.R. 5

"(c) Nothing in this Paragraph shall be construed to limit the right of the State of Georgia to use capital punishment to enforce the laws of this state.

(d) Nothing in this Paragraph shall be construed to limit the right of the State of Georgia to allow and regulate the use of advance directives or living wills.

(e) Nothing in this Paragraph shall be construed to limit the right of the State of Georgia to allow and regulate the use of contraceptives."

"We have not 'cherry-picked' only the conservative counties for this effort, but have included more liberal metro counties, such as Fulton and DeKalb. In each of these more liberal counties, as individual House districts are polled, the positive results will be useful in convincing the Georgia House members of the need for this important Amendment," said Crozier, "Even the pro-abortion House members may be surprised to discover the depth of pro-life sentiment in their district."

Other more conservative Atlanta metro counties who will be voting include: Gwinnett, Cherokee, Fayette, Paulding and Carroll. Other metro counties, elsewhere around the state, include: Muscogee (Columbus), Hall (Gainesville), Chatham (Savannah), Troup (LaGrange), Tift (Tifton), Thomas (Thomasville), Ware (Waycross), Loundes (Valdosta), Colquitt (Moultrie) and Glynn (Brunswick and St. Simons).

The question will also appear on the Fannin County Republican ballot, home district of Speaker David Ralston.

*[Georgia Right to Life](#) promotes respect and effective legal protection for all human life from its earliest biological beginning through natural death. GRTL is one of a number of organizations that have adopted [Personhood](#) as the most effective pro-life strategy for the 21st century.*