

Editor, Times Union,

As Director of Right to Life of North Central Indiana (an affiliate of Indiana Right to Life), I want to address the April 7, front page article on abortion.

Indiana Right to Life and its affiliates, as well as many pro-life legislators, have been criticized for taking an incremental approach through legislation to stopping abortion. Under the incremental approach, Indiana has enacted numerous laws that chip away at abortion. The group mentioned in the article, Hoosiers for Life, claims incrementalism is killing babies. To the contrary, the incremental approach has caused the number of Indiana abortions to decline for eight consecutive years. More information on our successful strategy is at www.nci4life.org.

Hoosiers for Life's stated goal is to pass a law that would do away with abortions all together. This has been the goal of Right to Life of North Central Indiana, Indiana Right to Life and the national pro-life movement since 1973, and we've made great progress. Unfortunately, with the current environment that includes a liberal judicial system and a Supreme Court that still has a pro-abortion majority, legislation such as the Protection at Conception Act has no chance of surviving a court challenge. Activist judges would also likely use it as a weapon to strike down all of Indiana's pro-life laws.

We understand there are differences in strategy to reaching our mutual goal of ending abortion. What we can't understand is why Hoosiers for Life has to publicly, and aggressively, attack pro-life representatives or candidates who don't agree with their specific strategy. I have to agree with Rep. David Wolkins' statement that "all of us are philosophically on the same side, but it's splitting the pro-life group."

It's sad to see pro-life legislators such as Reps. David Wolkins, Tim Wesco, Jack Jordan, Ben Smaltz and Sen. Travis Holdman being publicly attacked, not by the pro-abortion side, but by pro-lifers. While we don't agree with the strategy behind the legislation authored by Rep. Curt Nisly, we do appreciate his pro-life voting record and his support for life.

It's also worth noting that Right to Life of North Central Indiana does more than support pro-life legislation. We also work to encourage a culture of life by partnering with pregnancy centers, encouraging students to share their pro-life position with their peers, promoting life through billboards and radio, and holding special events such as the annual Life Chain, workshops for pastors and church leaders, and training events. This method, combined with pro-life legislation, has resulted in a 40 percent decline in abortions on north central Indiana women in the past two years alone.

We welcome positive, respectful discussion among all pro-lifers so that we can together to promote life and end abortion. It's unfortunate that what is happening now could tear the pro-life movement apart and potentially cause us to lose the ground we have gained to end abortion and protect the unborn.

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