



Fetal Dignity Laws

KEY POINTS

Fetal dignity laws help shape a culture that acknowledges the humanity of the unborn and affirms the dignity of each lost life.

Planned Parenthood's business of selling the remains of the unborn illustrates their high disregard for the human dignity of the life that was lost.

Fetal dignity laws require burial/cremation, prohibit sale/profit, and/or prohibit transfer of fetal remains. Some provide death certificates for miscarried babies or tax credits or bereavement leave for their parents.

Family Research Council actively recommends and supports fetal dignity laws, which affirm the human dignity of the unborn and protect women's health and safety via stricter regulation of the abortion industry.

In 2015, the Center for Medical Progress (CMP) released undercover videos that exposed Planned Parenthood's role in trafficking aborted baby body parts to buy and sell for research purposes. It is clear that harvesting and selling these body parts subsidizes the abortion industry. Furthermore, this industry incentivizes harmful practices such as late-term abortion, altering abortion methods for the sake of preserving the remains for sale, violating patient privacy, and possibly even killing some children born alive in order to harvest their organs.

Between 2015 and 2016, in the wake of the CMP videos' release, the number of states that introduced fetal dignity laws rose by 500 percent (5 to 26 states). Since that time, a total of 42 states have introduced fetal dignity laws. A record-high five states enacted such laws in 2021.

Legislative Intent: The discovery that aborted fetal remains are being held in jars and bought and sold has provided valuable insight into the abortion industry's shocking disregard for human life. Fetal dignity laws help solve this problem by shaping a culture that acknowledges the humanity of the unborn and affirms the dignity of each life lost.

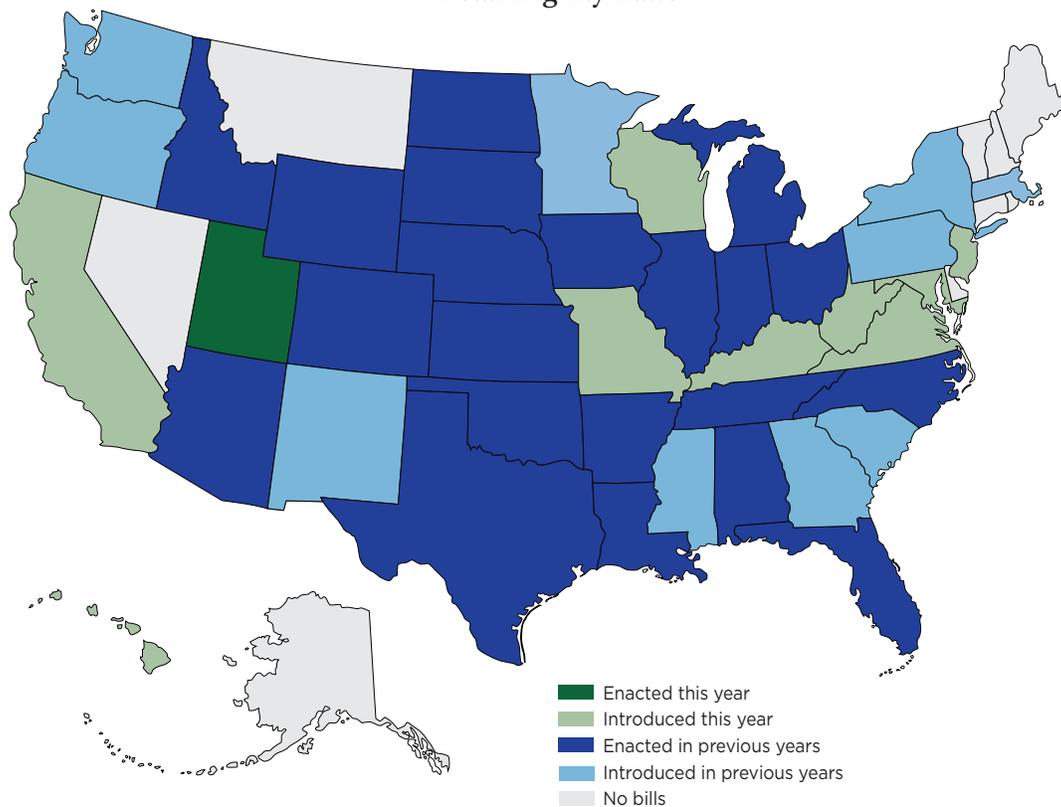
Various fetal dignity laws currently in place include protections such as:

- (1) requiring abortion suppliers to bury or cremate unborn children after an abortion,
- (2) prohibiting the sale of (or, in some cases, prohibiting the profiting from) baby body parts,
- (3) prohibiting the transfer of fetal remains,
- (4) prohibiting the use of fetal remains for research (or, in some cases, prohibiting the public funding of research involving fetal remains),
- (5) providing death certificates for miscarried or stillborn babies,
- (6) providing income tax credit to parents of miscarried or stillborn babies, and/or
- (7) providing bereavement leave to parents of miscarried or stillborn babies.

Although fetal dignity laws vary in their particulars, they all have one shared goal: they all have the effect of promoting the dignity of the unborn.

The 2015 CMP videos highlighted the gruesome reality that the abortion industry was procuring and selling fetal remains on a secondary market for brains, livers, etc.

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for research. By preventing the harvesting, selling, and use of fetal remains for research purposes, fetal dignity laws short-circuit the abhorrent multi-million-dollar industry the CMP videos revealed. These bills also protect women from many of the unethical actions—such as violating patient privacy and altering abortion methods—that are done solely for furthering Planned Parenthood’s business interests.

Some states pass stand-alone bills that recognize fetal dignity indirectly, either by providing death certificates for miscarried babies or providing income tax credits to their parents.

Planned Parenthood’s business of selling the remains of the unborn illustrates their high disregard for the human dignity of the life that was lost. Such disregard for the unborn was highlighted by notorious abortion doctors Kermit Gosnell and Ulrich Klopfer, who kept the remains in jars and plastic bags. Whether directly (by requiring dignified handling of fetal remains) or indirectly (by recognizing the unborn child as an unborn child), fetal dignity laws affirm the human dignity of the unborn.

Key Provisions:

Requiring abortion suppliers to **bury or cremate** unborn children after an abortion.

Prohibiting the transfer of fetal remains.

Prohibiting the sale of (or, in some cases, prohibits the profiting from) baby body parts.

Prohibiting the use of **fetal remains for research** (or, in some cases, prohibiting the public funding of research involving fetal remains).

Providing **death certificates** for miscarried or stillborn babies.

Providing a **tax credit** for parents who have lost a child from miscarriage or stillbirth.

Providing **bereavement leave** to parents of miscarried or stillborn babies.