



# Endeavour Forum Inc

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## Infant Viability Bill

In October 2015, Dr Rachel Carling-Jenkins introduced the **Infant Viability Bill** into the Victorian parliament. This is the first formal attempt at pro-life legislation in Victoria in decades, and the first legislative attempt to remedy the abortion law reforms of 2008. Under this Bill:

1. Abortions would no longer be allowed from the 24th week of pregnancy.
2. Infant viability will be promoted and supported (all infants born alive from the 24th week of pregnancy onwards, including as the result of a medical emergency, must be cared for with the intent to save the infant's life if at all possible).
3. Mothers who are at least 24 weeks pregnant, who present in distress to their doctor must be offered practical support, for example a referral to a pregnancy support service offering holistic care (counselling, social and practical support).
4. Penalties will be introduced for physicians who breach the new laws and for medical facilities in which the laws are breached. Mothers will not be criminalised or face penalties.

**Dr Rachel Carling-Jenkins** is a member for Western Metropolitan in the upper house of the Victorian Parliament, representing the Democratic Labour Party (DLP). In her First Speech in Parliament she said: "My desire is to contribute to a society which has as its core aim the human flourishing of all its members ... It is human dignity and the common good which I will pursue here in this place ... I will bring the value of, and the diversity within, life to the forefront of our minds...."

**How you can help:** The success of the **Infant Viability Bill** relies heavily on the support it receives from the public. Volunteers will be needed for a petitioning drive, letter writing campaign, and more. If you would like Rachel to speak to your group about the Bill and to discuss ways in which you can help, please contact her electorate office: 3/1 13 Watton St. Werribee Vic.3030. Website: [rachelmp.com.au](http://rachelmp.com.au)  
**See details for Life Coalition Dinner, page 16. Book now!**

South Dakota has become the 13th state in the US to ban abortions after 20 weeks gestation to protect unborn babies from painful, late-term abortions. In March Gov. Dennis Daugaard signed into law a bill to ban abortions after 20 weeks gestation and penalize doctors who do late-term abortions in non-emergency situations. Penalties for violations of the law include up to a year in jail and a \$2,000 fine. The only exceptions are certain medical emergency cases. Gov. Daugaard's office told the Associated Press that the state's Attorney General "will be prepared to defend the constitutionality of the bill" if pro-abortion groups challenge it.

The bill is modeled after the **Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act**, which is law in 12 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

Though abortion advocates deny the science of fetal pain, researchers have established that unborn babies can feel pain at 20 weeks or earlier. Dr. Steven Zielinski, an internal medicine physician from Oregon, is one of the leading researchers validating research showing evidence for unborn pain.

He has testified before the US Congress that an unborn child could feel pain at "eight-and-a-half weeks and possibly earlier". He and his colleagues Dr. Vincent J. Collins and Thomas J. Marzen wrote, "The functioning neurological structures necessary to suffer pain are in place as early as 8 weeks, but certainly by 13 1/2 weeks gestation. Sensory nerves, including nociceptors, reach the skin of the fetus before the 9th week of gestation. The first detectable brain activity occurs in the thalamus between the 8th and 10th weeks. The movement of electrical impulses through the neural fibres and spinal column takes place between 8 and 9 weeks gestation. By 13 1/2 weeks, the entire sensory nervous system functions as a whole in all parts of the body." See also the testimony of Dr. Anthony Levatino to the Judiciary Committee, US House of Representatives, 17 May 2012, on page 5 of this Newsletter, in which he described a second-trimester abortion.



Dr. Rachel Carling-Jenkins, Ph.D



Baby at 24 weeks gestation



Dr. Anthony Levatino