Dear Pro-Life Partners, June 1, 2025

Jackson County Judge Jerri J. Zhang seems to be all over the place. Eight weeks after she ruled that Missouri's health and safety regulations protecting women who are having an abortion did not violate Amendment 3 (a reasonable ruling), she reversed her position to rule that these same regulations were now *unconstitutional* under Amendment 3. Any amendment that would prohibit health and safety must be inherently corrupt.

On the flip side, Attorney General Andrew Bailey served a cease and desist order to Planned Parenthood to stop doing chemical abortions until a complication report has been filed with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (again, reasonable). He stated, "Planned Parenthood has a documented history of subverting state law, including failure to file complication reports. This cease and desist letter ensures that basic health and safety standards are met." Another clear sign of corruption by the nation's largest abortion provider.

One Missouri pro-life bill that "everybody agrees with," according to Rep. Jim Murphy, is SS SCS HB 121, legislation that would take a refreshing step in the right direction. This bill would

- Help communities fund safety incubators in which new parents can relinquish a newborn for up to 90 days (increased from previous 45 days), no questions asked.
- Make adoptions more affordable through established funding.
- Increase tax credits for Maternity Homes and a "National Diaper Bank."

The tide continued to turn on May 14 when the Missouri Senate advanced HCD HJR 73 to the Secretary of State's office to be placed on the 2026 ballot. This resolution gives Missouri voters an opportunity to repeal Amendment 3 and **restore respect for women and babies** in our Missouri Constitution. Two Senate Bills, SB#2 SCS SB 22 and SS SB 152, may seem unrelated on the surface, but are crucial to success (lest history repeat itself). The former gives the Secretary of State more oversight over ballot language, and the latter prevents foreign spending in state ballot measures.

As for the Western Region, we will be working very closely with the state office for the next 18 months to help pass this pro-life legislation, while maintaining our dedication to sharing the message of life with our communities. We are motivated by a desire to have an enduring impact on saving unborn lives and preserving the welfare of those who would be negatively impacted by abortion. Our to-do list includes equipping pro-lifers, educating pro-choicers, and ultimately changing hearts and minds to create a shift in our culture. We want to be a light and a voice for the most vulnerable. Our emphasis on education comes from the understanding that although legislation is highly important, even if Missouri returned 100% to pro-life laws, there would still be abortion-minded individuals to reach.

For instance, when you hear about surveys that show that the majority of Americans want legalized abortion, they are correct in that most people may consider themselves pro-choice and believe in abortion "rights" *to a certain degree*. However, the vast majority of Americans will draw the line on abortion somewhere. If we can engage in dialogue where they are, we have a good chance of demonstrating the truth that unborn children have the right to life at all stages. Why? Because anytime someone says they are in favor of abortion until _____, there is a fallacy at work. What makes it okay at one point, but not at another? (Other than magical fairy dust.) Logically, it's either always acceptable…or never.

Our greatest gains probably come through boots-on-the-ground engagement. But the ground can be slippery and the point of engagement a moving target. After Amendment 3 passed by a narrow margin, I conducted some focus groups to determine how we could improve our approach and messaging, and we came up with what I call a 2-Tier approach:

- Tier-One involves approaching with Compassion, focusing on mom as much as baby.
- Tier-Two seeks to appeal to the Conscience and show what an abortion actually entails.

As a result, the Western Region developed new outreach materials that are available to all our pro-life partners to use as outreach resources in your church, neighborhood, book club, pickleball group, knitting circle, you name it! These materials (and more) are available online free of charge because we want to make it easy to share the message of life. (Visit mrl-wr.org to order.) As we move forward to educate and legislate for life, I encourage you to have conversations in your communities. It can be an intimidating processing, but remember, truth can withstand scrutiny!

Partnering with You for Life!
Linda Verhulst, MRL-WR