

# The Texas Heartbeat Act: Affecting the parturient one beat at a time

*Kendra Brown MD, Ana-Lisa Ramirez-Chapman MD*

## Introduction

- Senate Bill 8, The Texas Heartbeat Act, passed during the 87th legislative session and went into effect September 1, 2021.
- Prohibits physicians from knowingly inducing an abortion after six weeks gestation when a fetal heartbeat is detected without repercussion[1].
- Exceptions are allowed if deemed as a “medical emergency.”
  - Ex: severe maternal cardiac disease, maternal malignancy, and pre-viable premature rupture of membranes (PPROM) with sepsis[2].



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## Case Report

- Healthy 34 year-old G2P1 with Di-Di twin uterine pregnancy at 15wk gestation presented with PPRM.
- Initial vital signs were stable, labs unremarkable. Fetal heart tones were detected on admission.
- On day two, patient had increased uterine tenderness, leukocytosis, increased tachycardia, and was diagnosed with intra-amniotic infection in the setting of PPRM.
- The appropriate documentation was made by the obstetricians
- labor was medically induced with Misoprostol, with the possibility of proceeding with a D&C.



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## Discussion

- This new bill can greatly impact the anesthesiologist's role in management of the parturient.
- Life threatening infection can lead to bacteremia, affect coagulation, and potentially eliminate the ability to safely perform neuraxial anesthesia.
- This case stresses the impact of legislation in management of the parturient, and the necessity for physician input and involvement early in the gestational course to safely provide and coordinate care.



## References

1. White K. et al., Texas Senate Bill 8: Medical and Legal Implications. Texas Policy Evaluation Project. *Research Brief*: 2021.
2. Women's Right to Know Act. Amended by: Acts 2021, 87th Leg., R.S., Ch. 62 (S.B. 8), Sec 6, eff. September 1, 2021. <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/docs/hs/htm/hs.171.htm>