

Editorial & Opinions ENOUGH

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"Because you have stood with us in the past; we commit to never allow pressures to stop us from standing for you today," Jeff Jobe, 2010



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Farming, veterans' issues receive attention in third week



By **REPRESENTATIVE BART ROWLAND**
Kentucky House of Representatives District 21

The pace really picked up during week three of the 2019 General Assembly, with legislation on its way to the Senate for consideration after clearing both House committees and the full House. Already almost 600 bills and resolutions have been filed for consideration in both the House and Senate, and there are still four weeks before the deadline for requesting a bill be drafted.

The first bill to pass the House this session was, quite fittingly, a nod to our agricultural heritage. House Bill 236 is part of our ongoing effort to help Kentucky farmers growing industrial hemp. Its provisions will bring our state further in line with federal guidelines in order to promote the hemp industry. The measure has the support of many in the agricultural community, including Commissioner of Agriculture Ryan Quarles. HB 236 now goes to the Senate for consideration.

Another pro-farming bill, HB 308, was filed this week and I look forward to the discussion it brings about how critical it is to keep farm land dedicated to agriculture as well as how we can support young people who would like to begin farming. This measure would establish a tax credit as an incentive for those who currently farm to sell land and assets to those who are beginning their farming career. If passed, House Bill 308 would provide a tax credit when land and assets are sold to a beginning farmer. The maximum amount of credit that can be claimed under House Bill 308 is \$25,000 per year and farmers must be Kentucky residents to qualify for the credit.

The House voted unanimously to approve legislation honoring those who

have made the ultimate sacrifice while defending our nation. The bill, HB 17, would designate the Honor and Remember flag as the state's emblem of the service and sacrifice of the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces. Kentuckians have been defending this nation since before we were a state, and more than 11,000 Kentuckians have died in combat in the century since World War I.

A veterans' nursing home in Bowling Green is one step closer to reality after members of the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee approved the bill and sent it to the full House for consideration. House Bill 24 appropriates \$2.5 million for design and preconstruction from the General Fund to the Department of Veterans' Affairs. This funding comes in addition to the \$10.5 million in state bond funding that was allocated by the 2017 General Assembly.

Of course, the budget still remains our top priority this session. Budget subcommittees have already begun meeting, but we look forward to hearing from Governor Andy Beshear about his budget proposal. The Governor's budget speech is scheduled for this Tuesday, January 28 at 7 p.m. EST and will be shown live on Kentucky Educational Television's website, www.ket.org.

I hope to continue updating you on our work in Frankfort. If you have any questions or comments about this session, I can be reached during the week from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (EST) through the toll-free message line at 1-800-372-7181. They will ask you to share contact information, but I will get the message and I do indeed appreciate hearing from constituents. You can also contact me via e-mail at Bart.Rowland@lrc.ky.gov. You can keep track of committee meetings and potential legislation through the Kentucky Legislature Home Page at www.legislature.ky.gov and you can also follow me on Twitter @KYREPROWLAND.

Letter to the Editor

The Citizen welcomes letters to the editor regarding our publications or local issues of importance. Letters should be no more than 300 words; we reserve the right to edit for clarity or length, or to reject letters that are in poor taste or libelous. Writers must include their name and a valid telephone number for verification purposes. Anonymous letters will be rejected. Send your letter by email to jobe@jobeinc.com or mail to or drop off at any Jobe Publishing office.

What is the value of a life?



By **MARY BETH SALLEE**
Citizen Reporter
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Imagine standing on a tall hill. You look down into the valley below and see millions of your fellow human beings - 61 million to be exact - looking back up at you.

Now imagine seeing all of those 61 million human beings as babies, babies with innocent lives full of potential and hope. Now imagine seeing all of those babies disappear, vanish, as if no one cares.

61 million - That's the number of babies that have been senselessly aborted in the United States since Roe v. Wade took effect in 1973. Read that again: 61 million babies aborted in 47 years.

I am well aware that abortion is a "sensitive" topic, one that most choose not to discuss in order to avoid confrontation and conflict. But when is enough, enough?

I can write a list of reasons a mile long of why I am pro-life. As a Christian, I can tell you from a Biblical aspect why I am against abortion. I can provide facts and statistics in regards to abortion and medical safety.

But I think what it really boils down to is this: human decency and dignity for all.

Can someone please tell me what has happened to that? What has happened to justice and equality for all, even for the unborn? What has happened to our nation - our senators, our representatives, and heck, even those we sit next to in church - when it comes to standing up for the lives of these innocent babies?

What is the value of a life? When an unborn baby is aborted, a human heart stops beating. This is no different than if you or I were murdered and our heart stops beating. In both aspects, a life is wrongfully taken.

On January 24, President Donald J. Trump became the first sitting president in American history to speak at the March For Life Rally in Washington, D.C.

I'm well aware that there are issues surrounding our President. I'm also well aware that there are times when President Trump would be better off to keep his words to himself on certain topics. But if we want our President to stop using words that are harmful, then we must also recognize him when he chooses words that are healing.

So in closing, I leave you with an excerpt below from President Trump's speech. Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative, I hope you read the following words with an open heart and realize that those 61 million babies - even those who were seen as imperfect, unplanned, and unprivileged - all deserved a chance at life.

"We cannot know what our citizens yet unborn will achieve. The dreams they will imagine. The masterpieces they will create. The discoveries they will make. But we know this: every life brings love into this world. Every child brings joy to a family. Every person is worth protecting. And above all, we know that every human soul is divine and every human life, born and unborn, is made in the holy image of Almighty God."

Mary Beth Sallee resides in Hart County with her husband and son. She works as a reporter for the Hart County News-Herald.

NOTE: The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of Jobe Publishing.

Letter to the Editor

Local coverage

To whom it may concern

Your local coverage is refreshing. Not all that happens in Tompkinsville is bad or should be some promotion for families in power. Nice to see someone giving everyone their 15-minutes or attention.

My grandchildren looked nice in the paper mailed to me in Russellville. I'll always love this community and would love to come home but doesn't look like that will happen.

Joyce Carver Oliver
Russellville

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