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Associated Press

Ariz. law bans abortions based on race or gender

Associated Press, 03.30.11, 01:42 PM EDT

PHOENIX -- Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer has signed what is likely the first legislation in the nation to ban abortions over ethnicity.

The law makes it a felony to perform or provide financing for an abortion sought because of the race or sex of the fetus or a parent's race.

Supporters say the measure is an important statement against discrimination and for life.

Critics say there's no evidence that selective abortions occur in Arizona, and doctors could face jail time if they lose an affidavit that an abortion isn't for selection purposes.

The New York-based Guttmacher Institute tracks U.S. abortion laws and says the statute is the first to adopt a race selection ban on abortions.

Illinois, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania already have laws that ban abortion for the purpose of gender selection.

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