

Debbie Wasserman Schultz: Saying Life Begins at Conception Is 'Extreme and Radical'

By Matt Cover
November 3, 2011



Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D.-Fla.)

(CNSNews.com) - Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.), chair of the Democratic National Committee, said Thursday that for states to enact constitutional amendments that say human life begins at conception is “an extreme and radical step.”

“For the vast majority of Americans, including people on both sides of the abortion issue, this is an extreme and radical step,” she said.

Speaking to reporters on a conference call, Wasserman Schultz said that so-called personhood amendments are a “divisive, dangerous, and destructive” attack on women.

“To American women, their reproductive health and choice is an intensely personal and private issue between themselves, their families, and their doctors,” the DNC chairwoman said. “But Republicans in Washington and across the country have tried to limit these rights, with their assault on Planned Parenthood in Congress and restrictive laws in the states being among several examples.”

“Now,” she said, “the effort by the far right [is] to pass these so-called personhood amendments--divisive, dangerous, and destructive laws which would cripple a woman’s right to choose, limit access to birth control, and put the lives of women with difficult pregnancies at risk.”

Wasserman Shultz called the personhood amendments being considered or petitioned for in Mississippi, Ohio, Texas, Kansas, and Florida “the most extreme assault on a woman’s right to choose.”

Personhood amendments define when a human being becomes a “person” under the law. An amendment proposed in Mississippi, for example, says that a person is “every

human being from the moment of fertilization, cloning or the functional equivalent thereof.”

Wasserman Shultz said that the Mississippi amendment--which will go before voters on Nov. 8--will outlaw all abortions and some forms of birth control (presumably because they kill human embryos) and also IUDs, the morning-after pill, and in vitro fertilization procedures that create and discard human embryos.

Under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states are required to provide equal protection of the law to all persons.

Wasserman Schultz said that one of her main goals was to dissuade Florida voters from signing a petition needed to get a personhood amendment on the ballot there in 2012.

“We’re sounding the alarm bells now because it’s absolutely critical that Floridians understand just how extreme this personhood campaign is, what it would do to not only a woman’s right to choose but to saving the lives of women, to the opportunity for parents to be--the opportunity for men and women to become parents when they’ve not been able to,” she said.

Florida's proposed amendment says: “The words ‘person’ and ‘natural person’ apply to all human beings, irrespective of age, race, health, function, condition of physical and/or mental dependency and/or disability, or method of reproduction, from the beginning of the biological development of that human being.”

Reference Original Website: <http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/debbie-wasserman-schultz-saying-life-begins-conception-extreme-and-radical>