By:  Paxton, et al. S.B. No. 2243

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to required counseling before an abortion is performed.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1.  Section 171.012(a), Health and Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a)  Consent to an abortion is voluntary and informed only if:

(1)  the physician who is to perform the abortion informs the pregnant woman on whom the abortion is to be performed of:

(A)  the physician's name;

(B)  the particular medical risks associated with the particular abortion procedure to be employed, including, when medically accurate:

(i)  the risks of infection and hemorrhage;

(ii)  the potential danger to a subsequent pregnancy and of infertility; and

(iii)  the possibility of increased risk of breast cancer following an induced abortion and the natural protective effect of a completed pregnancy in avoiding breast cancer;

(C)  the probable gestational age of the unborn child at the time the abortion is to be performed; and

(D)  the medical risks associated with carrying the child to term;

(2)  the physician who is to perform the abortion or the physician's agent informs the pregnant woman that:

(A)  medical assistance benefits may be available for prenatal care, childbirth, and neonatal care;

(B)  the father is liable for assistance in the support of the child without regard to whether the father has offered to pay for the abortion; and

(C)  public and private agencies provide pregnancy prevention counseling and medical referrals for obtaining pregnancy prevention medications or devices, including emergency contraception for victims of rape or incest;

(3)  the physician who is to perform the abortion or the physician's agent:

(A)  provides the pregnant woman with the printed materials described by Section 171.014; and

(B)  informs the pregnant woman that those materials:

(i)  have been provided by the commission [~~Department of State Health Services~~];

(ii)  are accessible on an Internet website sponsored by the commission [~~department~~];

(iii)  describe the unborn child and list agencies that offer alternatives to abortion; and

(iv)  include a list of agencies that offer sonogram services at no cost to the pregnant woman;

(4)  before any sedative or anesthesia is administered to the pregnant woman and at least 24 hours before the abortion or at least two hours before the abortion if the pregnant woman waives this requirement by certifying that she currently lives 100 miles or more from the nearest abortion provider that is a facility licensed under Chapter 245 or a facility that performs more than 50 abortions in any 12-month period:

(A)  the physician who is to perform the abortion or an agent of the physician who is also a sonographer certified by a national registry of medical sonographers performs a sonogram on the pregnant woman on whom the abortion is to be performed;

(B)  the physician who is to perform the abortion displays the sonogram images in a quality consistent with current medical practice in a manner that the pregnant woman may view them;

(C)  the physician who is to perform the abortion provides, in a manner understandable to a layperson, a verbal explanation of the results of the sonogram images, including a medical description of the dimensions of the embryo or fetus, the presence of cardiac activity, and the presence of external members and internal organs; and

(D)  the physician who is to perform the abortion or an agent of the physician who is also a sonographer certified by a national registry of medical sonographers makes audible the heart auscultation for the pregnant woman to hear, if present, in a quality consistent with current medical practice and provides, in a manner understandable to a layperson, a simultaneous verbal explanation of the heart auscultation;

(5)  before receiving a sonogram under Subdivision (4)(A) and before the abortion is performed and before any sedative or anesthesia is administered, the pregnant woman completes and certifies with her signature an election form that states as follows:

"ABORTION AND SONOGRAM ELECTION

(1)  THE INFORMATION AND PRINTED MATERIALS DESCRIBED BY SECTIONS 171.012(a)(1)-(3), TEXAS HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE, HAVE BEEN PROVIDED AND EXPLAINED TO ME.

(2)  I UNDERSTAND THE NATURE AND CONSEQUENCES OF AN ABORTION.

(3)  TEXAS LAW REQUIRES THAT I RECEIVE A SONOGRAM PRIOR TO RECEIVING AN ABORTION.

(4)  I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE THE OPTION TO VIEW THE SONOGRAM IMAGES.

(5)  I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE THE OPTION TO HEAR THE HEARTBEAT.

(6)  I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM REQUIRED BY LAW TO HEAR AN EXPLANATION OF THE SONOGRAM IMAGES UNLESS I CERTIFY IN WRITING TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

\_\_\_ I AM PREGNANT AS A RESULT OF A SEXUAL ASSAULT, INCEST, OR OTHER VIOLATION OF THE TEXAS PENAL CODE THAT HAS BEEN REPORTED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES OR THAT HAS NOT BEEN REPORTED BECAUSE I REASONABLY BELIEVE THAT DOING SO WOULD PUT ME AT RISK OF RETALIATION RESULTING IN SERIOUS BODILY INJURY.

\_\_\_ I AM A MINOR AND OBTAINING AN ABORTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH JUDICIAL BYPASS PROCEDURES UNDER CHAPTER 33, TEXAS FAMILY CODE.

\_\_\_ MY FETUS HAS AN IRREVERSIBLE MEDICAL CONDITION OR ABNORMALITY, AS IDENTIFIED BY RELIABLE DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTED IN MY MEDICAL FILE.

(7)  I AM MAKING THIS ELECTION OF MY OWN FREE WILL AND WITHOUT COERCION.

(8)  FOR A WOMAN WHO LIVES 100 MILES OR MORE FROM THE NEAREST ABORTION PROVIDER THAT IS A FACILITY LICENSED UNDER CHAPTER 245, TEXAS HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE, OR A FACILITY THAT PERFORMS MORE THAN 50 ABORTIONS IN ANY 12-MONTH PERIOD ONLY:

I CERTIFY THAT, BECAUSE I CURRENTLY LIVE 100 MILES OR MORE FROM THE NEAREST ABORTION PROVIDER THAT IS A FACILITY LICENSED UNDER CHAPTER 245, TEXAS HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE, OR A FACILITY THAT PERFORMS MORE THAN 50 ABORTIONS IN ANY 12-MONTH PERIOD, I WAIVE THE REQUIREMENT TO WAIT 24 HOURS AFTER THE SONOGRAM IS PERFORMED BEFORE RECEIVING THE ABORTION PROCEDURE. MY PLACE OF RESIDENCE IS:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

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SIGNATURE DATE";

(6)  before the abortion is performed, the physician who is to perform the abortion receives a copy of the signed, written certification required by Subdivision (5); [~~and~~]

(7)  the pregnant woman is provided the name of each person who provides or explains the information required under this subsection; and

(8)  except during a medical emergency and before the abortion is performed, the physician certifies using a unique identifying number, devoid of personally identifying information of the pregnant woman, that:

(A)  the pregnant woman received pre-abortion counseling at no cost to the pregnant woman from a counselor who:

(i)  meets the qualifications established by commission rule;

(ii)  is not employed by, contracted with, or has a pecuniary interest in a facility licensed under Chapter 245, Health Safety Code;

(iii)  is authorized under a contract with the commission to provide counseling services in accordance with this subdivision; and

(B)  the counselor provided the pregnant woman in accordance with commission rules:

(i)  medically accurate information using the informational materials described by Section 171.014;

(ii)  an assessment of and offer of assistance in obtaining support services other than abortion that the pregnant woman may need or be eligible for, including housing, employment, resume development, child care, medical care, adoption services, and health benefit plan coverage;

(iii)  education on available state and local resources to address the pregnant woman's socioeconomic needs;

(iv)  screening for domestic violence, coercion of abortion, or human trafficking; and

(C)  the counselor certified using a unique identifying number, devoid of personally identifying information of the pregnant woman, that the pregnant woman completed the counseling.

(D)  the counselor reported to the commission de-identified demographic information to assist the commission in determining the supply and demand of social services in the pregnant woman's geographic region.

SECTION 2.  Section 171.0121, Health and Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 171.0121.  MEDICAL RECORD. (a)  Before the abortion begins, a copy of the signed, written certification received by the physician under Section 171.012(a)(6) and documentation of the completed counseling required under Section 171.012(a)(8) must be placed in the pregnant woman's medical records.

(b)  A copy of the signed, written certification required under Sections 171.012(a)(5) and (6), and documentation of the completed counseling required under Section 171.012(a)(8) shall be retained by the facility where the abortion is performed until:

(1)  the seventh anniversary of the date it is signed; or

(2)  if the pregnant woman is a minor, the later of:

(A)  the seventh anniversary of the date it is signed; or

(B)  the woman's 21st birthday.

SECTION 3.  (a)  Notwithstanding Sections 171.012 and 171.0121, Health and Safety Code, as amended by this Act, a physician is not required to comply with the changes in law made by this Act before March 1, 2020.

(b)  Not later than December 1, 2020, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall adopt rules as necessary to implement this Act.

(c)  Not later than March 1, 2020, the Health and Human Services Commission shall contract with one or more counseling providers throughout the state to provide the services described by Section 171.012, Health and Safety Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 4.  The changes in law made by this Act apply only to an abortion performed on or after March 1, 2020. An abortion performed before March 1, 2020, is governed by the law applicable to the abortion immediately before the effective date of this Act, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 5.  It is the intent of the legislature that every provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word in this Act, and every application of the provisions in this Act to each person or entity, are severable from each other. If any application of any provision in this Act to any person, group of persons, or circumstances is found by a court to be invalid for any reason, the remaining applications of that provision to all other persons and circumstances shall be severed and may not be affected.

SECTION 6.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.