



## COALITION FILES SUIT AGAINST STATE OFFICIALS TO COMPEL COMPLIANCE WITH ABORTION REGULATIONS AG SAYS SUIT MISDIRECTED

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) A coalition of state legislators, a doctor, and a woman who has had two abortions filed suit Monday against the state Attorney General and the state Board of Health, alleging they have abrogated their responsibility to enforce state laws on abortion. Upon learning of the lawsuit in a press release, Attorney General Drew Edmondson accused those involved of "grandstanding."

The lawsuit was filed in Oklahoma County District Court by Rep. Bill Graves, R-Oklahoma City, a persistent opponent of abortion. The plaintiffs include 21 GOP legislators and one Democrat lawmaker, an Oklahoma City physician and an Oklahoma City woman. The plaintiffs contend that state health administrators and the state's chief law enforcement officer have refused to enforce



Rep. Bill Graves

two statutes adopted in 1963 to regulate abortions, particularly those performed in abortion clinics.

One regulation decrees, "No person shall perform or induce an abortion upon a pregnant woman subsequent to the end of the first trimester of her pregnancy, unless such abortion is performed or induced in a general hospital." The other statute cited by the plaintiffs declares, "An abortion otherwise permitted by law shall be performed only in a hospital ... which meets standards set" by the Health Department. The statutory definition of hospital encompasses abortion clinics, the plaintiffs contend.

Abortion clinics in Oklahoma "operate

with impunity," charged Graves, R-Oklahoma City. "So far as we can determine, only the marketplace regulates their activities."

"This is not an issue of pro-life versus pro-choice; the point of this litigation is enforcement of the laws," said House GOP Leader Larry Ferguson, one of the plaintiffs. "The statutes should be enforced or repealed," the Cleveland Republican said.

The defendants have refused to honor their legal obligations to enforce the two laws because of an opinion issued 12 years ago by then-Attorney General Mike Turpen, the plaintiffs allege.

In 1984, Turpen asserted that both stat-  
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## ABORTION RULE EFFORT SIDETRACKS OMBUDSMAN BILL

By Shawn Ashley  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) An effort to protect the state's long-term care ombudsman program from federal budget cuts was sidetracked on Monday when a state lawmaker pressed for the addition of new language setting rules for abortion facilities.



Rep. Dan Webb

Rep. Dan Webb, R-Oklahoma City, successfully challenged the acceptance of the conference committee report for **HB2407** and succeeded in having the bill returned to conference committee where the abortion facility

rules were directed to be made a part of the bill. The bill, by Rep. Abe Deutschendorf, D-Lawton, would specify the purpose of the State Long-term Care Ombudsman Program to improve the quality of life and the quality of care of elderly citizens residing in long-term care facilities in Oklahoma.

Supporters of the bill, fearful of federal budget cuts, say the measure is necessary to help keep the program alive.

But Webb said his proposal, which directs the Board of Health to set rules which

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