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# Rhode Island Rabbis Vigorously Support Extreme Abortion Bill

March 16, 2019



On 3/5/19, the Rhode Island Senate

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Judiciary Committee heard testimony in support of Senate Bill 152 Sub A, an extreme abortion bill currently being debated. Bill 152 A adds a broad “health” exception for abortions after viability. The exception would allow women to abort unborn babies up to nine months of pregnancy for basically any “health” reason, including “age, economic, social and emotional factors,” It also requires the State to pay for all abortions sought by Medicaid-eligible pregnant women, relaxes abortion facility inspections, and eliminates all restrictions on methods of abortion. See details of the bill at:

<https://www.lifenews.com/2019/03/12/rhode-island-bill-to-legalize-abortion-up-to-birth-heads-to-state-senate/>

In her testimony to the Senate Committee, Rabbi Sarah Mack, President of the Board of Rabbis of Greater Rhode Island, stated that **Jewish law is clear that in cases of danger to the mother's life, abortion is not just permissible but required. Due to the very mainstream Jewish view that the fetus is not yet a person and therefore has no rights, Jews have a right to abortion in all circumstances. She argued that freedom of religion protections**

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**under our Constitution guarantee  
Jewish rights to unlimited abortion.**

Her testimony starts at 2:44 on the  
video this link:

[http://ritv.devosvideo.com/show?  
video=e4d45f6fff4c&apg=234d9d19](http://ritv.devosvideo.com/show?video=e4d45f6fff4c&apg=234d9d19)

The Bill has already passed the Rhode Island State House, where Rabbi Mack stated, “I stand before you as a woman and a mother of two children, said Rabbi Sarah Mack, “I am grateful for the profound blessing to choose when to have my children with a loving partner. I am grateful for access to medical care that that allows me to stay healthy and safe—care that must be available to all women. All women deserve the agency to make decisions about their own bodies.” [Catholics for Choice](#)

Rabbi Mack's extreme view of abortion rights in Judaism deliberately omits three inconvenient truths in the Jewish tradition.

### **1) The God of Israel abhors child**

**killing:** *Jeremiah 7:30.* “For the Children of Judah have done that which is evil in My sight, saith the Lord; they have set their detestable things in the house whereon My name is called, to defile it. And they have built the high

places of Topheth, which is the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters in the fire which I commanded not, neither came it into my mind.”

*Psalm*

*106:35.* And they mingled with the nations and learned their deeds. They worshipped their idols, which became a snare for them, They slaughtered their sons and daughters to the demons. They shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters whom they slaughtered to the idols of Canaan, and the land became polluted with the blood. And they became unclean through their deeds, and they went astray with their acts.

**2) Judaism prohibits abortion:** *“He who spills the blood of man within man shall have his blood spilt.”* The Talmud interprets "the blood of man in man" as to include a fetus, which is the blood of man in man. Things that are prohibited under the Noahide laws are also prohibited to Jews.

**3) Jewish law pragmatically allows a life of the mother exception in very rare cases, which does not grant a parent the right to abortion under 99% of the circumstances to which Rabbi Mack refers. Currently, only 1%**

*of pregnancies present a life threatening situation for the Mother.*

Former United States Surgeon General, Dr. C. Everett Koop, stated publicly that in his thirty-eight years as a pediatric surgeon, he was never aware of a single situation in which a freeborn child's life had to be taken in order to save the life of the mother.\*

Rabbi Mack's statements may reflect today's majority rabbinic opinion on extreme abortion; however, our most respected rabbis clearly declare the rights of the unborn under Jewish law:

### **Rabbi Shimon Cowen**

opposition of Noahide law to the abortion of an unborn life, except in very special circumstances, embodies one of the deepest norms of human society, the protection of life.” In other words, Torah forbids abortion on demand, whether by a Jew or non-Jew. The ‘pragmatic’ consideration that if we insist on this, another purported ‘religious’ position, which does not allow the exceptions provided by Noahide law, could also prevail. In fact, it panders to moral relativism. It supports the extension of this global mass phenomenon of killing, both morally wrong itself and with all kinds

“The

of further corrosive consequences for society. So, too, it is spurious to allow a person a so-called "civil liberty" to abort. There is no such liberty to kill, in the sights of Noahide law.

### **Rabbi Norman Lamm**

“The

freedom of parents to crush prenatal life, which now seems to be in vogue, will eventually lead to utter destruction,” Rabbi Norman Lamm stated in 1970, “because it is only a small leap of logic from feticide to infanticide, to getting rid of infants who may not fulfill our ideals of mental and physical health, or, eventually, ethnic and genetic respectability.” Rabbi Lamm reiterated those themes in a sermon from 1976: “Never, never, must we allow this desacralization of life — whether in the form of benevolent euthanasia or free and easy abortions ... or any of the other manifestations of this fundamental antagonism to life — to influence us.”

### **Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson**

“Should

there be those who desire to persuade [you] that — God forbid — you perform an abortion: Tell them that this constitutes deliberate murder of a

creature who is as yet unable to protect himself from those who seek to murder him.”

### **Rav Moshe Feinstein**

"Not

only are Jews prohibited from having an abortion (except in the most extreme circumstances), but they are prohibited from assisting non-Jews from having an abortion too. According to halacha, abortion is prohibited for non-Jews; it's actually a capital crime. A Jewish doctor may not perform an abortion even if it would result in antipathy towards Jews.”

The State Senate Judiciary Committee didn't hear these truths, but you can contact them [here](#) to inform them of this Jewish view. In Rhode Island, profiteering from legal mass slaughter of innocents may not prevail if we raise our voice in opposition even in the eleventh hour.

To contact Rabbi Mack, email her at [rabbimack@temple-beth-el.org](mailto:rabbimack@temple-beth-el.org) or snail mail her at Temple Beth El. 70 Orchard Avenue, Providence, RI 02911

May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and good life upon us and upon all Israel. Amen.

Cecily

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