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The unborn do not remain forever unborn.

Protecting those who cannot protect themselves is one of the primary roles of government, and no one is more incapable of protecting themselves than the unborn.

A few months ago, I submitted a request to the Lt. Governor to have the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services conduct a study during the 87th on the current state-funded programs and services offered to expecting and new parents in Texas, including the alternatives to abortion program. In addition, I requested the committee make recommendations for how the Texas Legislature could support mothers, especially if *Roe v. Wade* was overturned or reversed.

I am pleased that the Lt. Governor included some of these items in his charge to the Senate Committee on State Affairs. This charge specifically states that this committee should "(m)onitor the impact of Senate Bill 8, The Texas Heartbeat Act, and the expanded funding for alternatives to abortion programs passed by the 87th Legislature. Study alternatives to abortion programs' effectiveness in meeting the needs of pregnant and postpartum women and recommend how the Legislature should strengthen the program. Recommend ways to provide additional alternatives to abortion and comprehensive informed consent resources to mothers who are expecting."

It was a timely request. With the ruling by the Supreme Courts on *Roe v. Wade* that decisions regarding the legality of abortions is once again be left to the states, it is crucial that Texas be prepared to respond to the needs of expecting and new parents.

The unborn do not remain forever unborn. Therefore, it is crucial that the legislature be exceedingly vigilant to not pass any legislation that would impede the care of, and support for, new parents or the newborn.

One area that can be improved, specifically relating to the alternatives to abortion program, would be the expansion of these programs to additional areas of the state and implementing some way to measure success of these programs. If the intention is to provide "alternatives" to abortion, it is imperative that we know how well we are doing at achieving this goal.

There are many aspects of this issue that could be addressed and there are still problems that we need to solve, but at least Texas is on the right track.

