



**State Senator
Kirk Watson
District 14**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The following is a statement from Sen. Watson regarding Senate Bill 8:

Senate Bill 8 once again places the State in the position of deciding how a woman should exercise her constitutional right to an abortion. Instead of recognizing a woman's freedom to make personal choices about her body and family, this legislation forces the belief systems of some onto all Texas women. The word "liberty" is often evoked by many supporting this bill as the ultimate right that must be protected, but that right is all but forgotten when it comes to a woman's liberty about her body and family.

This bill does nothing to protect the health or safety of the woman - a point the author does not dispute - and instead hurts the safety of these women and families. The prohibitions in this bill on the donation of fetal tissue harms critical research, all in supposed response to discredited videos. As if this was not bad enough, the bill now treats placenta and an umbilical cord, which has always been recognized as the woman's tissue, as fetal tissue that cannot be donated, but of course, only when it is associated with an elective abortion. This bill is so focused on outlawing abortions that it would discard the lives that can be saved through the donation of this blood and tissue.

To compound this misplaced priority, SB 8 effectively outlaws the dilation and evacuation procedure, which is the safest and most widely used abortion procedure for second trimester abortions. And once again the author has admitted that this is not being done to improve the health and safety of the woman, but instead it is about protecting the dignity of an unviable fetus.

For years those pushing this type of legislation have hidden behind the pretext of protecting women's health in their attempt to regulate abortion out of existence. Now that this has been exposed by the Supreme Court, they seek new excuses and measures that do nothing but limit the constitutional rights of Texas women. It is incredibly troubling that anybody would be willing to subvert the rights of a woman and make her face greater harm, all because she is exercising a constitutionally guaranteed right in a manner that they do not agree with. It is time we stop pretending we know what is best for Texas woman and actually embrace the true meaning of "liberty" for all.

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