



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: The Significance of the Texas Heartbeat Law- Part 2

Guest(s): Janet Porter

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello, everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener-supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Roger Marsh: On September 1st, the US Supreme Court refused to block the Texas Heartbeat Act, thereby allowing the law to go into effect. This law states that, "If a heartbeat is detected in a preborn baby, that baby is protected in the state of Texas." This was an exciting and historic victory for life in Texas, but the battle for life is ongoing. A Texas court has since acted to block the law while its constitutionality is litigated in the lower courts, and now, the Department of Justice is getting involved. We must all continue to watch and pray as these cases proceed.

Hello, and welcome to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Just days after the Supreme Court refused to block the Texas Heartbeat Act, Dr. Dobson sat down to have a conversation with his friend, Janet Porter. We're going to hear the conclusion of their discussion today, but first, let me introduce you to our guest. Janet Porter is the founder of Faith2Action, a pro-life legislative advocacy organization.

Janet firmly believes, as does Dr. Dobson, that, "if a heartbeat is detected, the baby is protected." Janet served as legislative director for Ohio Right to Life, where she successfully lobbied for the passage of the nation's first partial birth abortion ban. She also worked as national director of the Center for Reclaiming America, founded by Dr. D. James Kennedy. While she was there, she initiated the Truth in Love campaign, which features former homosexuals in newspaper and television ads. Janet has also appeared on *Anderson Cooper 360*, *Fox & Friends*, *The Today Show*, *ABC Evening News*, *20/20*, *Nightline*, and *CBS This Morning*. She chronicled her decade-long battle to save babies in the womb in her latest book called *A Heartbeat Away*. Let's listen now as Dr. Dobson and Janet Porter discuss the Texas Heartbeat Act and what it means for the pro-life movement today.

Dr. James Dobson: Janet, let's start the conversation today where we left off yesterday with what has just occurred. Tell us about the Heartbeat Bill. There'll be a lot of people

listening to us who didn't hear the program yesterday. Let's recap for them. What has taken place, and why are we so excited about it?

Janet Porter: Sure. It's a very simple bill. It's very simply put. It says, "If a heartbeat is detected, the baby is protected." That's the bill that just became law in the state of Texas, and this just happened on September 1st. We're going to see tens of thousands of babies saved in the state of Texas. It is an exciting, exciting moment to be alive, to see our prayers finally coming to flourish, to see those answers come and babies live and not die.

Dr. James Dobson: Hm. So, on September 1st, the Supreme Court released the news that they would not issue a stay on the legislation passed by the state of Texas. Then it's called a Heartbeat Bill. Explain it one more time. What is the Heartbeat Bill?

Janet Porter: Sure. It basically says that if you have a baby in the womb who has a measurable detectable heartbeat, like any other patient in a hospital or anybody you find unconscious on the street, what's the first thing you do? You check for a pulse. Why? Because the heartbeat is a universally recognized indicator of life, right? And so, we've never been to a funeral of somebody who has a beating heart. That's the reason. And so, what we're seeing is that why not use that yardstick that science has provided for us across the board? Why do we deny that lifesaving indicator? Why do we deny that when it comes to our very young members of our human family, our most vulnerable human beings? And so what we're seeing, states across the country, 29 states introduced it, 14 have passed it, and now Texas enforcing it. This is basically saying that to deny a heartbeat is to deny science. To ignore it is heartless. And that's what I told the Texas legislature when I came down to testify.

But I'll take you back just a minute more and give you a little background on how this thing happened. There's a lot of losses you get to before you get to this victory, right? And in the state of Texas, we had other bills that have been introduced, but we just never really got the traction. State Representative Briscoe Cain and Tom DeLay, they did a lot of the background work. They actually put the Heartbeat Bill as one of the stands to make in the Republican party platform in the state of Texas. They worked to do it.

And I was at a meeting, I was at a National Association of Christian Lawmakers meeting. We did not have a Senate sponsor in Texas, and we had gone a session, we couldn't find one. Well, guess what? I heard a guy, Senator Bryan Hughes, speak. He stood up at the platform and he used his time at the podium to present the gospel. And I said, "That's my guy." And I texted Briscoe Cain, the then sponsor of the Heartbeat Bill in Texas, and I said, "What do you think of Bryan Hughes?" I got a thumbs up emoji. I asked him to carry the Heartbeat Bill. He did, and a short while later, I'm sitting at the table on the floor of the Texas Senate. And at the end of the table is Senator Bryan Hughes, the sponsor, the man we asked to sponsor the Texas Heartbeat Bill, who just happened to be the chairman of the committee that heard the bill and voted it out.

I didn't even know that at the time. I just knew he had a heart for God. That's the guy I want. And that's how we got this bill in Texas is that people who were sold out to God, willing to do what it takes, and do the background work to get to this day, that's how we saw this victory. And it's an incredible, incredible thing to witness.

Dr. James Dobson: Now, we explained in the previous program that this is not the final decision. This did not address Roe v. Wade. The court allowed a pro-life law in Texas to remain in force that protects the unborn child after the heart is detectable, and that is typically at about six weeks in gestation.

Janet Porter: And that's why it's not a six-week ban. It's a Heartbeat Bill. And because that heartbeat, as you know doctor, that baby's heart begins to beat as early as 18 days, but our technology isn't up to standard yet. We can only detect it as early as around six weeks. But it's not about six weeks. It's about whether or not you can detect that heartbeat, and as technology improves, we're going to go closer and closer to that line of conception. We're going to protect more and more babies. That's probably eventually going to get them all, because as we're finding, the abortionist industry, they're motivated by money and they're not going to be able to stay open even for a fraction of their business. It's incredible, incredible victory.

And you know, I'm hearing from people all over the country telling me about this. I mean, I got a call from Tom DeLay yesterday. He said, "My wife is crying." Here he was as the majority leader of the United States House of Representatives, he gave up his time to help us lobby for years, going back and forth to Washington, to lobby for the Heartbeat Bill. He worked and did the background work in the state of Texas with not only Briscoe Cain, Representative Shelby Slawson, with Bryan Hughes and others, but he said, "You know what? We tried to defund abortion in Congress." You know what's better than defunding abortion? Ending abortion. And that's what happened in his state. And that's what's so exciting. I mean, when we would go around and lobby for the Heartbeat Bill, what he would tell members of Congress is that his biggest regret in leaving Congress is that he didn't end abortion.

Dr. James Dobson: Janet some people, as I said, did not hear yesterday's program. Tell us the significance of 13 other states also passing Heartbeat Bills.

Janet Porter: You know, what's great is that every state that introduces, every state that passes a Heartbeat Bill and passes it into law, sends a message, a signal to the Supreme Court, that America has shifted. We want to keep hearts beating, and that's why we saw a poll that says seven out of 10 in America agree, even a Democrat majority. That's the shocking thing. They didn't believe that even Democrats by a 55% margin, according to George Barna, want to see hearts beating. 86% of Republicans. It's astounding to see, and they're realizing America has shifted. We believe that you cannot turn your back on a fellow human being whose heartbeat can be heard. That heart is beating like an SOS

crying for help, crying for protection, and so thankfully, the people of the state of Texas answered that call and protected those children.

Dr. James Dobson: Janet, neither you nor I are lawyers, but talk about that Mississippi case. Just give us a thumbnail sketch of what that really means.

Janet Porter: Well, the fact that they've got a case in Mississippi that says "from 15 weeks, we're going to protect children from that time," because right now the court says, "We can protect children from the point of viability." You know what viability really is? It's where an abortionist takes a measurement on the ultrasound and then takes a guess. It can be as much as 90% wrong, and really, it's a measure of our technology. It's whether or not we have the equipment that's able to sustain life outside the womb, but a child 50 years ago born at six months didn't stand much of a chance, right? But that happens all the time now. Six, seven months, my own nephew was born at seven months. This happens all the time. It doesn't mean that babies today are more human than they were 50 years ago. It just means our technology's better.

So, instead of measuring our technology, instead of an arbitrary line that's being drawn, how about what we do is we move that line back? That's what Mississippi attempts to do, moving it back to 15 weeks. Heartbeat goes even further, taking it back to when we can first hear that heartbeat at six weeks, and what the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals said in the Arkansas and the North Dakota heartbeat laws, they said that we've got a better indicator, that we have a more "certain and scientific marker, a better measurement," so that if the court says we're allowed to protect children when the child is likely to survive outside the womb, guess what? Heartbeat is the best indicator, because what science has shown, that if you have a detectable heartbeat in an unborn child, there is a 95% to 98% chance that child will survive to live birth. So, we've got a better marker.

Mississippi is a good first step, but those Heartbeat Bills in the court system that follow, I believe, is going to move that ... they're going to move that line to the place where we're inches away from our goal of conception instead of miles away, where we currently are, at viability.

Dr. James Dobson: Janet, what are you hearing from people around the country? What are the Texans saying to you and other people? Are you getting the kind of exuberant response that you and I share today?

Janet Porter: It's phenomenal. I talked to Mark Crutcher of Life Dynamics in Texas. He's a guy that when I was beating up against the wall and we were fighting for the heartbeat in Ohio and we were losing and we're getting vetoed and vetoed again, fighting right to life to pass the most protective bill in the country, he would say things to me like, "How's it going, Janet?" And I'd say, "Well, I can count my friends on one hand." But he said to me, "Janet, did you go down to the State House to make friends, or did you go down there to end abortion?" And the answer is, "If there's something better than making friends and being

liked and having access, it's ending abortions." It's better than photo ops any day. And so, he kept me going and I thanked him to keep me going in this battle, and that the babies in his state are now protected by law if their heartbeats can be heard.

Dr. James Dobson: You said something a few minutes ago that I want to go back to, having to do with where Americans are at this time. George Barna has done research on that subject extensively. Talk about his stats and what they mean for where we really are on this issue of life.

Janet Porter: Sure. You know, in any state poll that we have done on the Heartbeat Bill, we come out way ahead. The most recent poll that's been done nationally was the George Barna poll. Very respected pollster. In fact, I went to them because I trust them. Everybody realizes that they're sound, that they do good work. They can be trusted. They're credible.

And what they found is that ... This is a shocker, right? So are you ready for this? Seven out of 10 in America favor the heartbeat law. 69%, seven out of 10, say, "If the doctor can detect the heartbeat of an unborn baby, that baby should be legally protected." And so, not only that, 86% of Republicans, but I hope you're sitting down doc, because this is the part that was shocking. For people that are listening, I want to tell you, this is a legitimate poll. This is a scientific poll that said, "Even a majority of Democrats, 55% of Democrats, favor the Heartbeat Bill." They're the ones with the pro-abortion platform. They're the ones that are screaming bloody murder about what's happening in Texas, and yet their own base supports Heartbeat Bills, and they are out of step with America. They're out of step with even their own democratic base. That's what we've learned.

Dr. James Dobson: Consider the implications of what Janet just said. Most of what you hear in the news and then on the mainstream media is a lie. They refuse to acknowledge the truth of the fact that America is far more pro-life than people know, and they don't want us to know that. They don't want anybody talking about it. The truth of matter is, we've got the majority on our side.

Janet Porter: Yes, we do, and it's an overwhelming majority. I mean, can you imagine an issue, if you're running on it, that 86% of your base favors it? Guess what? If you're a Republican, running on a Heartbeat Bill is probably your safest bet. It's the best thing you can do. When people say, "Oh, run from this," no, run to it if you want to win, but follow through when you win. And that's really the message is we want people that make those promises and keep those promises, not people that use babies to win elections instead of using elections to save babies.

The time to end abortion is now. And you know what? The best news of this year so far, in my opinion, is the fact that Texas did it with the Heartbeat Bill. Instead of abortion stopping a beating heart, a beating heart will stop abortion. Our bill saved lives before it ever became law. Before it ever passed the

committee, we knew of a baby that was saved just from the publicity, just from the news coverage of this Heartbeat Bill. That's why they're running from it.

You notice in the news coverage, doc, they don't talk about the Heartbeat Bill. They call it "The six-week ban." Well, you know what? That's not what this is. And when we detect that heartbeat earlier and earlier, we're going to protect more and more. And it's interesting to me that for nearly 50 years, when we would put up those bumper stickers, "Abortion stops a beating heart," they'd say, "Oh, that's not true. Oh, no, it's not." And when we introduced the Heartbeat Bill, the first thing they did was admit that they lied. They came out and they said, "This will outlaw nearly all abortions." And I just sat in the committee room saying, "Yeah, that's the idea, and finally, you're speaking the truth, that this is a baby, a fellow human being with a detectable heartbeat."

And this is what we found. I got to tell you this story. When we did this in Ohio, we rolled in the youngest to ever testify. We rolled in a mobile ultrasound. I put out a press release that the youngest to ever testify in state history was testifying, and we brought in a group of unborn babies and their moms as they came ... We hooked up the ultrasound and the pro aborts went wild. You know, "Janet and her gimmicks," and all of the rest. They hated it, but what that did is it put that baby and the beating heart and the ultrasound image out everywhere. And every time they talked about it, that's the images that people saw.

And when we went to Congress with Congressman Steve King as the chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee, he was hearing the federal Heartbeat Bill, and we brought in baby Lincoln. Baby Lincoln was 18 weeks old. All right? He came and testified through ultrasound. And there were people who were there who were protesting, and you know how they are. They're disruptive and obnoxious, right? But when that baby, when baby Lincoln's heartbeat, was seen and heard on that ultrasound in the congressional committee, the room was silent except for that heartbeat. And what we saw is that one of the women who was a protestor, who was disruptive just moments before, was wiping tears from both her eyes. And what that told me, Dr. Dobson, is if that baby's heartbeat can reach even the hardest of hearts, it can reach America, and it has.

Dr. James Dobson: Janet, we're talking to people all over the state of Texas through radio, and I appreciate so much you being our guest. Encourage them to let their legislators know how much you appreciate what they did here. It's echoed all across the country, and of course, our Governor of Texas, Governor Abbott, really gets a credit too. So, let's congratulate some people today.

Janet Porter: I want to do that. I said it publicly, congratulations to Tom DeLay, one of the MVPs-

Dr. James Dobson: He's a great friend of mine. I have great respect for him.

He's a phenomenal leader who's given countless hours, countless months and years, to help us. Also to Briscoe Cain, to Representative Shelby Slawson in the House to State Senator Bryan Hughes to Greg Abbott, as you said. One of the things Greg Abbott was so anxious to get this bill through, he kept tweeting it out, "Hey, we're next. We're next." As these bills that states were racing to get them passed, we're up to 12, now we're 13. And Greg Abbott says, "We're next." And thankfully, he got to sign that bill, and we're just exuberant to God that He allowed us to see this victory.

People say to me, "Oh, you know, Janet, this is because of you," or because of your work, or their work, or that ... No, this is because of the grace of God, and because pro-life people were willing to do whatever it takes. In the same way, when we talk about the pro-life pregnancy centers, people said to me, "You know, the pregnancy centers are there. They're there to help women." No, no, no. They say, "They're there to trick women." And I said, "Look, here's the bottom line. If you see any reference to Visa or MasterCard, if money changes hands, that's abortion. The pro-life services are free, and that says it all. They're motivated by money. We're helping women for free." And that has shown now America who it is that's not only pro-life, but pro-women, as we have been all along.

Dr. James Dobson: Let's read it again in conclusion. Psalm 139:13 and 14, "For you created my inmost being. You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful. I know that full well," from the words of King David. And there's no better place to end than with the word of God.

Janet Porter: Amen.

Dr. James Dobson: Janet, thank you for what you've done. This is marvelous. I can't even overstate it because you took this cause before anybody else was involved in it.

Janet Porter: And thank you, Dr. Dobson, for standing with me all the way. I'm very, very grateful beyond words, and we've just begun.

Roger Marsh: In Jeremiah 1:5, God says to Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I set you apart."

Every one of us was specially made by God for a purpose. As Dr. Dobson likes to say, "God doesn't make junk," and every abortion kills a precious life that God has carefully constructed. As Christians, we must be unapologetically pro-life. Like Proverbs 31:8 says, we must "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves." If you want to learn more about the pro-life movement or even get involved, please check out the Human Coalition at humancoalition.org. The Human Coalition is a pro-life organization that is working to eradicate abortion from the United States. Their website again is humancoalition.org.

Now, as I mentioned at the start of today's program, since the time this interview was recorded, a Texas court has, in fact, blocked the new Texas heartbeat law while its constitutionality is being litigated in the lower courts. Let's watch and pray as this case proceeds. You know, over 60 million innocent lives have been senselessly erased by abortion since the passage of Roe v. Wade in 1973. This is an evil that Dr. Dobson has fought against for decades, and now, we must ask God to have mercy on us all.

Here at Family Talk, we never want to tackle the issue of abortion without expressing our concern and compassion for women who are in crisis pregnancies as well. When you're in that place, it really can feel like there is no one to turn to and nowhere to go. We want to tell you, though, that you do have a choice. You don't have to get an abortion. There are compassionate pro-life pregnancy centers all over the US just waiting to love you and to help you through this difficult but blessed journey.

Our friend, Lila Rose, president of Live Action, likes to say, "Always celebrate life first," so congratulations. Regardless of your circumstances, that baby in your womb was handmade by God, and his or her life has rich meaning in His economy. And by the way, Mom, so does yours. Also please know that if you are post-abortive, there is always, always forgiveness in Jesus Christ, and there are Christian support groups for post-abortive women and men all over the country as well. For more information on how to find a group in your area, visit us online at drjamesdobson.org.

Roger Marsh: Well, that's all the time we have for today, but thanks again for joining us for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. May God continue to richly bless you and your family.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Dr. James Dobson: What should parents do when a teenage daughter comes to them and speaks those painful words, "Mom and Dad, I'm pregnant."

Roger Marsh: For Family Talk, here's Dr. James Dobson.

Dr. James Dobson: Responding to a teenage pregnancy is one of the most difficult trials a parent can face. At the moment of revelation, it's perfectly normal to feel anger at the daughter who has brought this problem into their lives. They may even feel tempted to lash out at her for rejecting their advice and their example, but such a moment is no time for recriminations. It's more than likely that their daughter has already said to herself all the things they could think of to say, and they certainly can't reverse the circumstance by being harsh and unloving.

The truth is that their daughter needs more understanding now than ever before, and they should give it to her if possible. Help her grow through the difficult days ahead and avoid "I told you so" comments. She'll face many

important decisions in the next few months, and she'll need a calm, rational, and caring mother and father to assist in determining the very best path to take. If they can muster that kind of strength, they and their daughter will eventually find the lasting love and affection that often develops between people who have survived a crisis together.

Roger Marsh: To find out how you can partner with Family Talk, go to drjamesdobson.org.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hi everyone. This is Dr. Tim Clinton here for Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. You know, the news comes in all kinds of shapes, sizes, and formats these days, but how do you cut through the noise and get to the heart of the matters that affect your family? Come to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk and sign up for Dr. Dobson's monthly newsletter. You'll find clarity on tough issues, encouragement for your everyday life, and trusted principles to help you build strong, healthy, connected families. Go to drjamesdobson.org. Sign up today. That's drjamesdobson.org.

Roger Marsh: Hey, everyone. Roger Marsh here. When you think about your family and where they will be when you're no longer living, are you worried? Are you confident? Are you hopeful? What kind of legacy are you leaving for your children and their children? Here at Family Talk, we're committed to helping you understand the legacy that you're leaving for your family. Join us today at DrJamesDobson.org for helpful insights, tips, and advice from Dr. James Dobson himself, and remember, your legacy matters.

Dr. James Dobson: Hello, everyone. Do you need help dealing with the everyday tasks of raising a family? I'm James Dobson here, and if you do, I hope you'll tune in to our next edition of Family Talk. Our main purpose in this ministry is to put tools into your hands that will strengthen your marriage and help you raise your kids. Hope to see you right here next time for another edition of Family Talk.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Are you searching for a way to stay connected on issues that matter to you in your everyday life? Hi, this is Dr. Tim Clinton for Family Talk. I hope you'll follow us on Twitter. Our feed is full of engaging content that you're going to want to interact with and pass along to some people you love. You can listen to our popular broadcast, stay informed with Dr. Dobson's newsletter, or read our blogs and articles and more. Find our Twitter page by searching for [DrJamesDobsonFT](https://twitter.com/DrJamesDobsonFT). That's [DrJamesDobsonFT](https://twitter.com/DrJamesDobsonFT). I think you'll be glad you did.