



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, P.O. BOX 100

October 22, 2012

Honorable Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.
Speaker
31st Guam Legislature
155 Hesler Place
Hagatna, Guam 96910

Dear Speaker Won Pat,

I am calling the legislature into special session at 10 a.m. Wednesday, October 24, in accordance with my authority under the Organic Act. The sole subject of this session shall be for the legislature to consider Substituted Bill No. 52-31, *The Women's Reproductive Health Information Act of 2011*.

Madam Speaker, I introduced this bill 22 days after the 31st Guam Legislature and I came to office; that was nearly two years ago. According to the bills listed on your website, 474 more bills have been introduced since that time, several of which are for zoning. One of the bills introduced appropriated bond proceeds to purchase a beach. I'd hardly call such time spent crafting these provisions as useful to the people, or beneficial to their quality of life.

Bill No. 52 is a special piece of legislation. It is actually the second bill I introduced following my inauguration. The first bill I introduced was Bill No. 51, the *Unborn Child Protection Act of 2011*. That bill would have made it illegal to abort a child, who can feel pain. That bill also has not been acted on.

If enacted into law, Bill No. 52 will make it the right of women to receive legal information about the abortion procedure she is contemplating, information that is not currently required. This information ranges from the procedure itself to the other options and rights women have. These include the option to carry the child to term and give her to an adoptive family, for which there is a waiting list already.

Women also should be aware of their rights under the law to report men who have abused or raped them, who have enslaved them, who have sent them, under duress, to receive an abortion. Had this law existed at the time a 16-year-old victimized and indentured servant of the Blue House brothel allegedly was forced to have an abortion, it is quite possible justice may have been served sooner and, more importantly, the teen would have been aware of her rights for the first time. She is among those whom laws

like this are intended to protect. Information should be given to her about the responsibilities of fathers, and the counseling and welfare assistance she can receive should she choose to carry the child to term.

This information is not currently required to be given to women. They do not have the right to this information. This sad state of affairs is such an injustice, considering the litany of information available on the simplest of medical procedures. Indeed, there is more instruction about how to administer a dog's chewable heartworm medication than there is about this extremely invasive procedure. It is almost as though the system is designed to promote abortion by robbing women of the information they need to make the most informed decision. Imagine if women on Guam had a right to this information since 1973. We could have saved countless unborn children, and helped many women understand the physical and psychological harms abortion can cause.

But, alas, this hasn't been a right, and women and their unborn children had not the support of the law. We should not wait another day to grant this right to women and, hopefully, to give them the information that will lead to the choice of life. The legislature chose to hold this bill in abeyance for purposes I cannot imagine. Madam Speaker, on January 25, 2011, we had an opportunity together to give this right to women when I introduced this bill. Instead, the legislature's Rules Committee chose to sit on this bill after substantially changing it. As the clock ticked and the days went by, and women facing real issues with their reproductive health had choices to make, this government continued to rob them of the right to the information that could have produced a different outcome: life.

I am just grateful to the health committee chairman, Senator Dennis Rodriguez, Jr., for his courage and diligence. This bill has been resurrected because of his effort and the effort of those advocating for life in our community. Sen. Rodriguez has made the appropriate changes to revert the bill back to its intended purpose, and I pray that you and your colleagues will join him in defending life. Pass Bill No. 52.

Sincerely,



EDDIE BAZA CALVO

Cc: All senators