

TALKING POINTS ON THE ABORTION ISSUE

- The Democratic Party seeks to prevent abortions in the only way that works – by preventing unintended conceptions.
- **OUTLAWING ABORTION DOES NOT PREVENT ABORTIONS.** A committee of the U.S. Institute of Medicine estimated that one million abortions occurred annually in the U.S. *before* the Roe v. Wade decision in 1973. There were many more abortions when it was illegal than occur today and our population now is half again larger than it was then.
- The only sure way to prevent abortions is to prevent unintended conceptions. To accomplish that goal the committee of the National Institute of Medicine proposed a national norm of “No Unintended Conceptions.” That is what Democrats are working to achieve!
- The Democratic Party promotes the exercise of personal responsibility. Preventing unintended conceptions only happens when people take personal responsibility for their actions. Using a contraceptive is an act of personal responsibility. Communities and their leaders are responsible for educating their members about ways to prevent unintended conceptions. Every person, both male and female, shares an obligation to act responsibly.
- A study revealed that five out of every ten pregnancies in the United States were unintended and more than 40% of those ended in abortions (Guttmacher Institute, 2011). If we Americans will work together to reduce our unintended conceptions to levels that have been attained in some other countries, doing so will prevent many abortions. But we can do better than other countries! Our goal should be **no unintended conceptions**.
- Using one form of contraception greatly reduces unintended conceptions and abortions; using two reduces them to almost zero. Helping women of all incomes to get the most effective forms of reversible contraception prevents unintended pregnancies and abortions. (CDC, 2012)
- Democrats support the Roe v. Wade decision. In the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a woman’s right to privacy prevails over government regulation in the first trimester (about 13 weeks) of gestation. The Court also said that “at some point, the state interests as to protection of health, medical standards, and prenatal life, become dominant.” The court said that states may restrict abortions, providing that there are adequate provisions for protecting a woman’s health, in the second trimester. It said that states may prohibit abortions in the third trimester except in near life threatening situations. Most abortions in the U.S. (64.0%) are performed at ≤ 8 weeks' gestation; more than 90% are performed at ≤ 13 weeks' gestation. Fewer than 2% are done at ≥ 21 weeks' gestation (U.S. CDC, 2012).
- Nature itself destroys vast numbers of fertilized human eggs. “Around half of all fertilized eggs die and are lost (aborted) spontaneously, usually before the woman knows she is pregnant.” (U.S. National Institutes of Health web site) This biological fact has not been explained by those who claim that human life, as we know it generally, begins at the moment an egg is fertilized. The views of fellow citizens who believe this, though, are deeply felt and should be treated with respectful courtesy.