

Laws propose to restrict abortion in Idaho, Guam

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Approval of a virtual ban on abortion in Idaho, the demise of a complicated compromise in Maryland, and an enjoining of a tough Guam anti-abortion bill were among the latest state actions to come in the wake of last year's Supreme Court abortion decision.

Also, anti-abortion measures apparently were stuck in Kentucky and Minnesota legislative committees, and a veteran pro-life lawmaker was defeated in an Illinois primary.

By a 25-17 vote March 22, the Idaho Senate sent the governor a bill that would stop up to 98 percent of abortions in the state and set up a direct challenge to *Roe vs. Wade*, the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. With it came threats of a potato boycott if the governor signed it.

Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus, a Democrat and an abortion opponent, will have five days to consider the bill after it reaches his desk. If signed, the law would take effect July 1.

Pro-abortion forces in California, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, North Carolina and Michigan threatened to boycott Idaho potatoes if Andrus signed the bill. Under the legislation, abortion would be a prohibited means of birth control, and abortions would be outlawed except in cases of rape, incest, profound fetal deformity or where the mother's life is endangered.

Bishop Tod D. Brown of Boise said he was "proud that Idaho now leads our nation in the protection of human life from its beginning."

ACLU and Planned Parenthood leaders said they would seek to block enforcement if Andrus signs the bill.

With a compromise, Maryland's Senate early March 23 ended eight days of filibuster led by senators opposed to abortion. The lawmakers agreed to pass two bills, one allowing abortion and one restricting it. The abortion rights forces had the 24 votes needed to pass a liberal abortion law but were one vote short of the 32 needed to end debate.

But the two-bill plan failed later March 23 when a House of Delegates' committee voted 13-12 to reject the Senate's approach.

Abortion-rights members decided March 24 against seeking a vote in the House to force their bill onto the floor for a vote, thus ending 10 days of maneuvering on abortion in the Maryland General Assembly and quieting the issue for this session.

In Guam, U.S. District Judge Alex Munson blocked enforcement of the territorial law restricting abortion, signed March 19, pending a hearing March 26. The judge acted in a class-action filed by doctors' and nurses' associations, an Episcopal priest and a woman calling herself "Marie Doe" who wanted an abortion of an 8-week-old



AP/Wide World Photos
Pro-choice women react dejectedly to the Idaho Senate's March 22 vote approving legislation making abortion illegal as birth control.

fetus. The lawsuit cited a section of the law that makes advocating abortion illegal, calling it an infringement on free speech rights.

Guam's law was supported by Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron of Agana, who had threatened the possibility of excommunication for Catholic lawmakers who voted against it.

Also, U.S. Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., wrote March 23 to his colleagues asking they not support commonwealth status for Guam. Miller said the Guam law on abortion denied its citizens free speech.

In Illinois, a seven-term state legislator, Rep. Penny Pullen, who had sponsored anti-abortion legislation, lost a primary cam-

paign March 20 by 31 votes out of 14,831 cast. She said she might seek a recount.

In Kentucky, the state Catholic conference and Kentucky's five bishops said they would re-examine their strategy after legislation to restrict abortions stalled in Senate and House committees.

"For the bishops," said Ken Dupre, conference executive director, "this is probably the major disappointment of this session."

A Minnesota bill that would ban all abortions for birth control purposes and which would demand detailed, informed consent for other abortions was still in the House Rules Committee. An attempt to get it out of committee came up short.



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