



T E X A S
Alliance for Life

**NEWS RELEASE:
Texas Alliance for Life Endorses
Ken Paxton for Texas House Speaker**

Incumbent Joe Straus not considered pro-life

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CONTACT:

Joe Pojman, Ph.D.
Executive Director
512.736.3708 (mobile)
512.477.1244 (office)
joe@texasallianceforlife.org

AUSTIN -- Today Texas Alliance for Life publicly endorses Rep. Ken Paxton (R-McKinney) for Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives and urges all incumbent and newly-elected Representatives to support him in that race. Texas Alliance for Life also encourages pro-life Texans to contact their state representatives and urge them to support Rep. Paxton.

"We enthusiastically endorse pro-life Representative Ken Paxton for Speaker of the Texas House," said Joe Pojman, Ph.D., executive director of Texas Alliance for Life. "Texas deserves a committed, pro-life Speaker like Ken Paxton who will work to protect our most vulnerable Texans: the more than 80,000 innocent unborn children who die each year in Texas' abortion facilities. Ken has great integrity, and we believe he will allow the House to vote on greatly-needed, highly popular, pro-life bills that were passed last session by the Texas Senate but failed to pass the Texas House."

Pojman also announced that the vote for speaker will be used in Texas Alliance for Life's determination of the pro-life rating for each State Representative. He stated, "We intend to score the vote for speaker because we believe it will likely be among the most important votes in the 82nd Session."

Pojman said, "Texas Alliance for Life joins the large chorus of pro-life organizations and individuals who are asking House members not to support incumbent Speaker Joe Straus. Two years ago, Texas Alliance for Life voiced concern that under Speaker Straus, pro-life legislation would not pass the House. Unfortunately, our fears were realized."

Pojman continued, "Speaker Straus cannot be called pro-life. He has failed to pledge to oppose public funding for Planned Parenthood, received a \$1,000 campaign contribution from a Planned Parenthood PAC, and has been given high praise by Planned Parenthood for his 'tireless efforts'

during the last legislative session."^{1,2} In fact, Mr. Straus has praised Planned Parenthood, saying "they do so much good on the family planning and the women's health issues."³

In 2009 two pro-life bills that passed the Senate -- Senate Bill 182, the sonogram bill, and Senate Bill 1098, the "Choose Life" license plate bill to promote infant adoption -- died in the House without a floor vote. Both of these bills were strongly supported by Texas Alliance for Life.⁴

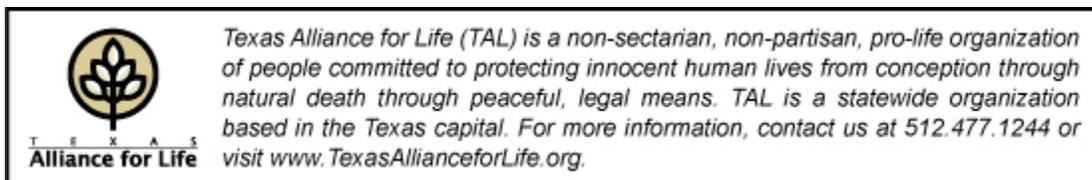
Rep. Ken Paxton is demonstrably pro-life and unequivocally opposes public funding for Planned Parenthood. On Monday, November 16, Texas Alliance for Life's standard candidate questionnaires were delivered, by email and by hand, to the offices of all announced candidates for speaker. Rep. Paxton responded within hours and answered all the questions⁵ in agreement with Texas Alliance for Life's position, indicating that he supports the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*; supports a law banning partial-birth abortion; opposes public funding for Planned Parenthood; supports the current state law that recognizes the personhood of an unborn child beginning at conception and legally protects that child against violent crimes like of homicide and assault, performed against the mother's wishes; supports a ban on human cloning; and supports a sonogram law.

Speaker Straus has failed to answer the questionnaire.

Rep. Paxton has a strong history of authoring and supporting pro-life legislation supported by Texas Alliance for Life. For example, in 2007, Paxton authored House Bill 225, with the bipartisan support of 50 House members, to prevent state public funding of embryonic stem cell research, which requires the destruction of human embryos. In 2007 Paxton authored the "Choose Life" license plate bill, House Bill 224. In 2009, Paxton co-authored the sonogram bill, House Bill 36, as well as the "Choose Life" license plate bill, House Bill 109.

By contrast, in 2007, Representative Straus co-authored House Bill 2704, a phony ban on human cloning. House Bill 2704 would allow the creation of living, human embryos by any "method other than fertilization" (i.e., human cloning) and would require the destruction of those embryos before implantation.

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¹ In June 2008, Straus accepted a [\\$1,000 campaign contribution](#) from Planned Parenthood's San Antonio PAC.

² Planned Parenthood Trust of San Antonio and South Central Texas' [fall 2009 newsletter](#) praised Straus for his "tireless efforts on behalf of Texas women and children during the last legislative session." Planned Parenthood receives at least \$20 million per year in Texas in appropriated public funds. Planned Parenthood currently operates 13 abortion facilities throughout the state is purchasing their 14th in Lubbock.

³ **Texas Monthly Talks**, Evan Smith Interview with Speaker Joe Straus, Jan. 28, 2009: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTehllCMMCE>.

⁴ Senate Bill 182 was scheduled for a House floor vote on the last possible day. Senate Bill 1098 and the companion bill House Bill 109, failed to pass the House Transportation Committee. The Straus-appointed committee chairman delayed these bills in their respective committees.

⁵ See http://www.texasallianceforlife.org/issues/leg_state/82r/docs/Speaker_Questionnaire_Paxton.pdf.