

Subject: Re: Fetal Anesthesia Bill
Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 9:01:48 PM MT
From: Shaun J. Gillis
To: Olszewski, Albert (Rep), aolszewski@flatheadortho.com

EXHIBIT 7
DATE 3-11-15
HB 479

Dear Representative Olszewski,

I am writing in SUPPORT of HB 479, the bill that would require anesthesia for fetal surgery or abortions on fetuses at or beyond 20 weeks of gestation. This is a timely bill as we know there are fetal surgical procedures performed in Montana and those human babies deserve to have anesthesia as much as any person who can feel pain.

Speaking to the fact that fetal procedures are being done, within the last few years I personally witnessed a fetal bladder decompression of over 2 liters of fluid in a term baby who had severe anomalies and whose bladder was inhibiting a vaginal delivery. The baby tolerated it but it was difficult to imagine the discomfort he felt during the multiple times the needle was inserted through his abdomen into his bladder.

Regarding fetal pain, there is scientific evidence proving that fetuses beyond 20 weeks of gestation can feel pain. Personally I have witnessed it while performing amniocenteses on women beyond the 20 week gestational age. On occasion, during the procedure, the baby's hand or foot will inadvertently hit the needle and the baby quickly recoils from the pain of being poked with that needle just as you or I would.

Representative Olszewski, thank you for your work on this important issue.

Warmly,

Shaun J. Gillis, MD
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