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FDA EXPANSION OF ABORTION PILL USE STILL DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN CHEMICAL ABORTION IS SAFER

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WASHINGTON – The nation's oldest and largest pro-life organization today warned that a decision by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to allow expanded use of the abortion drug RU-486 doesn't mean an increase in safety for women using the abortion method. In response to the FDA's action, the following statement may be attributed to National Right to Life Director of Education and Research Randall K. O'Bannon, Ph.D.

Many suspected that today's announcement by the FDA was a long time coming. Despite a record of at least 14 known deaths, and thousands of women suffering significant adverse events, the FDA relaxed safety standards and modified the protocol for mifepristone/misoprostol chemical abortions that had been in place since September of 2000.

The FDA, responding to a request by the U.S. distributor of the drug, has modified dosages, changed the administration, reduced the number of visits, expanded the prescriber pool, and extended the time frame where the drugs may be used. Though applauded by the abortion industry, the documentation demonstrating the impact on women's safety has not been made publicly available.

Certainly, none of the modifications is of any benefit to the unborn child.

For women, the mifepristone/misoprostol combination comes with significant cramping, bleeding, and other gastrointestinal side effects (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) that are expected parts of the chemical abortion process.

While it may be claimed that these side effects are supposed to be reduced with the new protocol, chemical abortions simply do not occur without significant bleeding, cramping, etc. That these side effects are similar to signs of ruptured ectopic pregnancy, serious infection, or may be the prelude to significant hemorrhage that could be missed by patients or even doctors expecting these as part of any chemical abortion would still appear to be a problem under any protocol.

In the end, it is obvious that the FDA's new protocol serves only the interests of the abortion industry by expanding their base of potential customers, increasing their

profit margin, and reducing the level of staff and amount of resources they have to devote to the patient.

It is clear whose interests it is the FDA is serving. It isn't the women, and it isn't the babies.

Founded in 1968, the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the federation of 50 state right-to-life affiliates and more than 3,000 local chapters, is the nation's oldest and largest grassroots pro-life organization. Recognized as the flagship of the pro-life movement, NRLC works through legislation and education to protect innocent human life from abortion, infanticide, assisted suicide and euthanasia.

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