



## FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS CATHOLIC DAYS AT THE CAPITOL

### REQUIRED INSTRUCTION IN HUMAN EMBRYOLOGY

#### Key Message:

**Support HB 1255 (Trabulsky) - Lines 366-378**

**Please support required instruction in grades 6-12 on the science of human embryologic and fetal development.**

#### TALKING POINTS:

- Currently, health education in Florida does not require instruction on human embryologic and fetal development. This information is essential for 6-12 grade health instruction because it provides students with important scientific knowledge about human reproduction and development.
- Understanding the intricate processes of human development can foster a deep appreciation and sense of wonder for the complex and sacred nature of human life.
- By learning about the process of embryologic and fetal development, students build critical thinking skills and gain insights into the importance of prenatal care and healthy pregnancy practices.

#### BILL PROVISIONS:

Requires health education in grades 6-12 to address human embryologic and fetal development. Curriculum must include a high-definition ultrasound video showing the development of the heart and other organs and movement of the limbs and head. It also must include a high-quality video showing and describing the process of fertilization and various stages of human development inside the uterus, noting significant markers in cell growth and organ development.

#### BACKGROUND:

Knowledge of human embryologic and fetal development is crucial for understanding reproductive health, pregnancy, and basic human biology. This is valuable information for middle and high schoolers as they grow in their knowledge of health science. It enhances students' understanding of biology, anatomy, and physiology, laying a foundation for informed decision-making about reproductive health. Most importantly, it helps students more deeply understand that all human life possesses inherent dignity and is worthy of respect from the moment of conception and throughout all stages of development.

Knowledge of embryologic and fetal development can help students understand how factors like maternal health, environment, and lifestyle choices can impact prenatal health and development. Additionally, understanding embryologic and fetal development contributes to students' overall scientific literacy, enabling them to engage with bioethical issues in human development, reproductive technologies, and genetic research.

## **POTENTIAL OBJECTIONS AND RESPONSES:**

**OBJECTION 1:** Isn't this information something that most students would encounter in high school biology class?

**RESPONSE 1:** While it is true that a student may encounter this information at some point during high school biology, this bill requires instruction in embryologic and fetal development in health education classes from grades 6-12. This bill provides broader access to this important information. It makes embryologic and fetal development a crucial piece of the health curriculum and each student's understanding of human life and reproductive science as they move through their middle and high school years.

**OBJECTION 2:** This bill is intended to indoctrinate students with anti-abortion propaganda.

**RESPONSE 2:** This bill requires health education in grades 6-12 to address human embryo and fetal development. It requires instruction to include a high-definition ultrasound video showing the development of the heart and other organs and movement of the limbs and head. It also requires a computer-generated video showing and describing the process of fertilization and various stages of human development inside the uterus, noting significant markers in cell growth and organ development from conception to birth.

This bill does not require any specific video or ultrasound to be shown. It merely requires that health instruction convey basic scientific facts and images related to human embryo and fetal development. This information will give students a deeper appreciation for the complexity and inherent dignity of each human life.

**OBJECTION 3:** Some schools may choose to show the "Baby Olivia" video which is medically inaccurate anti-abortion propaganda.

**RESPONSE 3:** Again, under this bill schools are not required to show any particular video of prenatal human development. However, the "Baby Olivia" video is a medically accurate depiction of intrauterine human development that was produced in consultation with a panel of medical doctors who endorsed the project. It is based on the latest scientific research related to human embryo and fetal development. Schools are not required to show this video, but if they chose to do so, it would satisfy the requirements in the bill.

## **BILL SPONSOR AND STATUS:**

**HB 1255 – Sponsor:** Trabulsky – Referred to Student Academic Success Subcommittee; PreK-12 Budget Subcommittee; Education & Employment Committee

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