



NARAL
Pro-Choice America

Former Gov. Mike Huckabee (R-AR)

Former Gov. Mike Huckabee served as lieutenant governor of Arkansas from 1993 to 1996, and governor from 1996 to 2007. Gov. Huckabee is anti-choice.

A description of Gov. Huckabee's actions on choice-related issues and a selection of his public statements on reproductive-health issues follow.

Promoting the Right to Choose in Arkansas

- 👉 Despite a judge's order to comply with federal law, Gov. Huckabee refused to authorize a Medicaid payment for abortion services for a 15-year old incest survivor, whose stepfather was brought up on criminal charges.¹
- 👉 Signed into law an abortion ban, which criminalizes some abortion services, with no exception to protect a woman's health.²
- 👉 Signed into law a measure that made Arkansas' existing parental-notice law more onerous by mandating notarized parental consent before a young woman may obtain an abortion.³
- 👉 Signed into law a biased counseling and mandatory delay measure, which prohibits women from receiving abortion care until they are subjected to a state-mandated lecture.⁴
- 👉 Signed into law a measure that established "Choose Life" license plates, and directed funding from their sale to anti-choice clinics that do not offer a full range of reproductive options.⁵ When the law came under attack and faced a constitutional challenge, Gov. Huckabee attempted to circumvent a pending lawsuit by signing a law that transferred authority for approving special license plates from the state legislature to the Department of Finance and Administration.⁶
- Although Gov. Huckabee signed into law a measure that required health-insurance plans that provide prescription-drug benefits to cover contraceptives equally, the law excluded coverage for emergency contraception. Additionally, the law granted a broad exemption for religious employers, as well as a wide range of secular organizations.⁷

In His Own Words

- “I am pro-life, unapologetically, and I believe that is a very important issue that defines who we are as a civilization. It’s not something I just arrived at, at the conclusion as to the origins of life. I respect people who differ with me on that issue, and I know there a lot of folks who take a different point of view. But if the whole world took a different point of view, I’m still going to be pro-life.”⁸
- “No individual should have the right to dismember and destroy the right of a developing, unborn child. Government has a responsibility to protect the helpless. It is with deep conviction that I believe life is a gift from God and that for a parent to lay down his or her child’s life for the sake of their own, violates the very spirit of parenthood and of the responsibility each person has for his or her own sexual activity.”⁹
- When asked if the repeal of *Roe v. Wade* would be a good day for America, Huckabee responded, “Most certainly.”¹⁰
- “I support and have always supported passage of a constitutional amendment to protect the right to life. My convictions regarding the sanctity of life have always been clear and consistent, without equivocation or wavering. I believe that *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned.”¹¹
- Upon signing a bill requiring women to receive a state-mandated lecture before receiving abortion services, Huckabee said, “thank the Lord [this bill] has become law. . . . One of the reasons we’re signing this bill today is God answered the prayers of those who want to respect life.”¹²

Notes:

¹ Joyce Price, *Huckabee Blocks Medicaid Funding of Teen’s Abortion*, WASH. TIMES, Aug. 11, 1996.

² S.B. 612, 81st Gen. Assem., Reg. Sess. (Ark. 1997).

³ H.B. 1033, 85th Gen. Assem., Reg. Sess. (Ark. 2005).

⁴ H.B. 1074, 83rd Gen. Assem., Reg. Sess. (Ark. 2001).

⁵ S.B. 76, 85th Gen. Assem., Reg. Sess. (Ark. 2005).

⁶ H.B. 2485, 85th Gen. Assem., Reg. Sess. (Ark. 2005); Michael Wickline, *Bill to Create Farm Agency Squeaks Through Senate*, ARK. DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE, Mar. 29, 2005; Michael Wickline, *“Choose Life” Plate Takes Blow Likely Unconstitutional, Attorney General Says*, ARK. DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE, Aug. 29, 2003.

⁷ H.B. 2618, 85th Gen. Assem., Reg. Sess. (Ark. 2005).

⁸ CQ Transcript of Press Conference Held by Mike Huckabee, April 5, 2007.

⁹ NARAL PRO-CHOICE AMERICA & NARAL PRO-CHOICE AMERICA FOUNDATION, *Who Decides? A State-by-State Review of Abortion and Reproductive Rights* (6th ed. 1997).

¹⁰ Transcript of GOP Presidential Debate in California, MSNBC, May 3, 2007.

¹¹ Statement from Campaign Website,
http://www.mikehuckabee.com/?FuseAction=Issues.View&Issue_id=11 (last visited Jan. 4, 2008).

¹² H.B. 1074, 83rd Gen. Assem., Reg. Sess (Ark. 2001); *Prayers Met, Governor Says in Signing Bill on Abortions*, ARK. DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE, Feb. 22, 2001, at A8.