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ACLU Statement on Arkansas Senate Passage of Bill to Ban Most Restrictive Abortion Law in the Country

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The Arkansas Senate today voted to pass a bill that would ban most abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy, which means that the bill will now go to Governor Mike Beebe. We are hopeful that he will veto it. (He recently vetoed a bill that banned abortion at 20 weeks, but the Arkansas legislature just overrode that veto today, giving that law immediate effect.)

If enacted, the 12-week ban would be the most severe such law in the country.

"This bill shows an absolute disregard for the health of the women of Arkansas," Rita Sklar, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas, said. "We urge Gov. Beebe to spare our state the indignity of passing the strictest such ban in the country and veto this bill."

"Lawmakers in Arkansas are placing women's lives on the line by passing the most severe ban on access to safe, legal medical care this country has seen in recent years," said Talcott Camp, deputy director of the ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project. "Nobody can predict what kinds of decisions a woman may have to make during a pregnancy, and it is outrageous for politicians to attempt to interfere in this serious and personal decision that a woman has to make with her family and her doctor."