

Oklahoma abortion bill veto upheld

by UPI

OKLAHOMA CITY - The Oklahoma state Senate failed to overturn Gov. Brad Henry's veto of a bill that would have blocked state-operated hospitals from performing abortions.

Senate Bill 714, which would also have kept public funds from hospitals performing abortions, failed by a 31-17 vote -- one vote short of the required amount to overturn a veto, The Oklahoman reported Thursday.

State Sen. Charlie Laster, D-Shawnee, voted for the initial bill but switched sides to uphold the governor's veto.

"I initially voted in favor of Senate Bill 714. However, in the days since that vote, I have visited with Governor Henry and multiple medical professionals," Laster told the newspaper.

"I am pro-life, and I have consistently voted for pro-life legislation. This bill, however, holds poorer Oklahomans to a different standard than everyone else, and I can't support that."

He added: "It does not allow an exception in the case of rape or incest and medical experts in Oklahoma believe this bill will undermine the relationship between doctors and their patients. The bill also interferes with private health insurance coverage."

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