

Circuit Court dismisses challenge to Texas Heartbeat Act

April 27, 2022

The U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals on April 26 [ordered](#) a district court to dismiss challenges to the Texas Heartbeat Act, which essentially bans abortions in Texas after about six weeks into a pregnancy.

The federal court order directs the lower court to dismiss all legal challenges to the private enforcement provisions of the law, which empowers private citizens to sue anyone who “aids or abets” an abortion after fetal cardiac activity can be detected. Those who bring the lawsuits can be awarded \$10,000 if they win.

The court order also directs the district court to consider whether the plaintiffs have standing to challenge the law.

The federal court ruling involved [*Whole Woman’s Health v. Jackson*](#), one of more than 20 suits filed in an effort to stop enforcement of the law.

Gov. Greg Abbott, who signed into law the fetal heartbeat bill, [tweeted](#) about the ruling, “Another legal loss for those challenging SB8—the pro-life law that is saving babies every day.”

Joe Pojman, executive director of the Texas Alliance for Life, called the court’s ruling “a substantial pro-life victory for Texas in federal courts.”