

News Update from Gongwer News Service

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### **House Passes Ban On Coercing Abortions**

Bills making it a crime to coerce a woman into having an abortion cleared the House this afternoon.

HB 4787 and HB 4830 passed 65-43.

The legislation would prohibit anyone from threatening or actually stalking or assaulting a woman because she is pregnant or, on learning that she will not abort the child, discontinuing support, firing her or coercing her as defined in the human trafficking laws. The penalty would be tied to the type of coercion used, with some actions being misdemeanors and some felonies.

Democrats attempted to amend the legislation to criminalize all reproductive coercion, including coercing a women into keeping a child or getting pregnant.

Rep. Amanda Price (R-Park Township), sponsor of the bill, said the legislation was meticulously crafted and the other scenarios should be dealt with in separate bills.

“The bills before you today do not need to be a source of division among us,” Ms. Price said on the House floor. “Labels like pro-choice and pro-life do not need to matter today.”

But Rep. Marcia Hovey-Wright (D-Muskegon) said the bills are a solution in search of a problem, and that it is rare for someone to coerce a woman into having an abortion. She said there are more stories of women who are domestic violence victims being coerced into getting pregnant.

“Let’s be honest with one another. These bills are not about protecting women,” she said on the House floor.