

# Agudath Israel Weighs in on Ohio Abortion Bill

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The House Committee on Community and Family Advancement continued to hear testimony this week on a controversial abortion bill, House Bill 69. The measure would restrict abortions from the time a fetal heartbeat can be detected, except for specific circumstances. While Agudath Israel has continuously held that a fetus is deserving of protection, there are extreme circumstances where Jewish law may in fact mandate an abortion. In line with this position, Agudath Israel maintains that House Bill 69 should allow a woman to invoke her religious exercise rights in those extreme circumstances where the law is in conflict with a woman's sincerely held religious beliefs.

Agudath Israel, along with Ohio Jewish Communities, sent a letter to the sponsors of HB 69, Rep. Christina Hagan and Rep. Ron Hood, asking for an amendment to the bill that will protect the religious convictions of all, while still maintaining their goal of strengthening protections for a fetus. If the amendment is adopted, the sponsors will send a strong message about the value of strengthening and protecting the free exercise of religion.