**From: Dustin Ingalls, Assistant Director**

**To: Interested parties**

**Subject: Voters to legislature: don’t waste your time on abortion ban**

**Date: 3/3/14**

With the West Virginia legislature considering a ban on abortion after the twentieth week of a pregnancy, PPP surveyed three key Senate districts (2, 7, and 17), and found that voters are not particularly sold on such bans, and they don’t think this is something their elected representatives should be debating right now.

In all three districts, voters in almost all cases support women’s right to an abortion after the twentieth week:

* 51% to 62% think it should be legal when the doctor determines the fetus has severe abnormalities that could cause fetal death or extreme disability
  + - When voters are read more data about what a woman faces when her fetus has such abnormalities, 56% to 69% think such abortions should be permitted, including 49% to 55% of Republicans and 43% to 61% of independents
* 46% to 61% think it should be legal when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest
* 49% to 59% think it should be legal when the doctor determines the fetus is not yet viable, and the woman and her family determine her health would not support continuing the pregnancy
* 48% to 57% think it should be legal when the doctor determines the woman would face serious, long-lasting health problems if she carried the pregnancy to term

42% to 50% of voters oppose a ban on abortions after 20 weeks with only the life of the mother as an exception but not fetal abnormalities or health risks to the woman. Further, 44% to 55% oppose such bans if they do not include exceptions for the life of the mother, rape, or incest, including even 41% to 49% of Republicans and 49% to 59% of independents.

More than anything, this is not voters’ top priority. Only 33% to 43% of voters, depending on the district, think this debate is worth the legislature’s time. Even among those who support an abortion ban after 20 weeks in the most stringent circumstances, only 46% to 52% think the legislature should be spending its time on this issue, not exactly an overwhelming cry.

*PPP surveyed 547 West Virginia 2nd Senate District voters (margin of error +/-4.2%), 738 7th District voters (+/-3.6%), and 541 17th District voters (+/-4.2%) from Feburary 28th to March 2nd. These polls were conducted by automated telephone interviews, and was sponsored by the Planned Parenthood Health Systems.*