



## Senator Bruce Starr

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### **Starr introduces Unborn Victims legislation in response to brutal death of Heather Snively and her son**

**Salem, OR** — Senator Bruce Starr (R-Hillsboro) requested priority legislation on Tuesday that would make the murder, manslaughter or criminally negligent homicide of an unborn child a prosecutable homicide.

Last Friday Heather Snively, a 21-year-old woman 7 months pregnant looking to exchange used baby clothes, was killed and cut open so her son could be removed from her womb. As Tuesday's *Oregonian* points out, the accused killer can only be charged with the death of Heather Snively because under current law the unborn child must have taken a breath in order to be considered a victim.

"There is no doubt that there are two victims, two crimes and two instances where justice must be served," said Starr. "The family of Heather Snively and her son John Stephens will always grieve for two, and the law should recognize that two lives were ended on Friday, not just one."

Starr's bill, which is being drafted in Legislative Counsel and is modeled after House Bill 2020 introduced in 2005, would create the crime of assault on an unborn child and expand criminal homicide to include the death of an unborn child. The bill would punish the assault of an unborn child with 10 years' imprisonment, \$250,000 fine or both. Thirty six other states and the federal government have similar legislation. The infamous California case involving Laci Peterson and her unborn child was prosecuted under a similar statute.

"I believe that in the eyes of Oregonians, the killer of Heather Snively deserves to be tried not just for the death of Heather, but for the death of her son," said Starr. "New life deserves all the protection the law will provide."

In 2004, a man attacked a pregnant women in Clackamas County, resulting in the loss of her unborn child. The man could only be charged with assault in the first degree, for which he only served 90 months. Starr's legislation would make the death of an unborn child a crime regardless of whether the mother lives or dies.

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