

I'm Catholic. I'm pro-life. And I'm voting for Harris. Here's why.

Updated July 28, 2024

I'm Catholic so by definition I'm conservative (but, I'm progressive, definitely NOT regressive)...and I am pro-life.

To my strict "Pro-Life" friends: I didn't write this to change your mind. I wrote this because I wanted to answer what I see as a valid question: How can anyone be pro-life and vote for Kamala Harris?

Because I'm pro-life, I won't vote for Donald Trump. Instead, I'm voting for the "more pro-life" person... that's Kamala Harris. I see Kamala Harris as the person who champions the whole spectrum of pro-life issues more effectively and consistently. I think most of my "Pro-Choice" friends already understand much of my logic.

Some Background

The USCCB gave guidance to Catholic voters in their statement "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship". This document was first issued in 2007 and then updated in 2011, 2015, 2019, and 2023.

In two carefully crafted paragraphs, they give their advice. Activists tend to quote only their favorite lines from these paragraphs, so here is the full text:

34. Catholics often face difficult choices about how to vote. This is why it is so important to vote according to a well-formed conscience that perceives the proper relationship among moral goods. A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who favors a policy promoting an intrinsically evil act, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to subhuman living conditions, redefining marriage in ways that violate its essential meaning, or racist behavior, if the voter's intent is to support that position. In such cases, a Catholic would be guilty of formal cooperation in grave evil. At the same time, a voter should not use a candidate's opposition to an intrinsic evil to justify indifference or inattentiveness to other important moral issues involving human life and dignity.

35. There may be times when a Catholic who rejects a candidate's unacceptable position even on policies promoting an intrinsically evil act may reasonably decide to vote for that candidate for other morally grave reasons. Voting in this way would be permissible only for truly grave moral reasons, not to advance narrow interests or partisan preferences or to ignore a fundamental moral evil.

First, it is noteworthy that besides abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide and gay marriage, the bishops also list as "intrinsically evil," policies "*deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to subhuman living conditions*" as well as policies promoting "*racist behavior.*" A more progressive interpretation of this text opens the door to a wider range of Catholic social teaching than just abortion and gay marriage.

Second, the **"if"** clause is very important. **A Catholic is in trouble only "if the voter's intent is to support that position."**

So, a Catholic can vote for Trump, even if his policies promote self-interest, pandering to the worst human instincts, racism, misogyny, subject immigrants to subhuman conditions (I could go on and on, but you get the drift) as long as the voter's intent is not to support those positions.

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And a Catholic can vote for Harris, even if her policies promote these identified “intrinsically evil acts”, as long as the voter's intent is not to support those positions.

For example, I do not support a total abortion ban, because I do find protecting human life, health and dignity requires a range of solutions through all stages of life ultimately are best for the lives of the baby and the mother and the family. Crisis pregnancies in all it's forms are never only about the unborn child. Reproductive healthcare of crisis pregnancies requires scientifically based, medical definitions of life, viability, disease, and courses of treatment...it's complicated. Sometimes, many times, medically required abortion is necessary to recognize the viability of the child, to save the mother's life, and to minimize the family's impact. The pregnant mother (and loving partner) and her doctor are solely in the best position to determine the best course of treatment...not a law that is far removed from the reality of the situation.

There is another paragraph from the guide, part of which my fellow pro-lifers like to quote. For them pro-life only means pro-birth and they make this the primary issue. Preventing abortion, they say carries more weight than the other issues including trauma of incest or rape, medical procedures, or other life issues after birth. Stopping abortion by any means possible they believe is necessary. I understand that, but don't accept it.

37. In making these decisions, it is essential for Catholics to be guided by a well-formed conscience that recognizes that all issues do not carry the same moral weight and that the moral obligation to oppose policies promoting intrinsically evil acts has a special claim on our consciences and our actions. These decisions should take into account a candidate's commitments, character, integrity, and ability to influence a given issue. In the end, this is a decision to be made by each Catholic guided by a conscience formed by Catholic moral teaching.

Well, I also understand and subscribe to what the rest of that paragraph states, “*These decisions should take into account a candidate's commitments, character, integrity, and ability to influence a given issue. In the end, this is a decision to be made by each Catholic guided by a conscience formed by Catholic moral teaching.*”

[I will vote my formed conscience, not blind allegiance to some ignorant ideology.]

In 2019 another major debate involved the document's introductory note. Language declaring that “the threat of abortion remains our **preeminent** priority” was adopted, while a proposed amendment to include the following full paragraph from Pope Francis was rejected:

Our defense of the innocent unborn, for example, needs to be clear, firm, and passionate, for at stake is the dignity of a human life, which is always sacred and demands love for each person, regardless of his or her stage of development. Equally sacred, however, are the lives of the poor, those already born, the destitute, the abandoned and the underprivileged, the vulnerable infirm and elderly exposed to covert euthanasia, the victims of human trafficking, new forms of slavery, and every form of rejection. (“Gaudete et Exsultate,” No. 101)

The amendment to include the full paragraph from Pope Francis failed by a vote of 143 to 69, perhaps because those who opposed the amendment framed it as a test of the bishops' continuing commitment to defend unborn human life.

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The failure to include the full Pope Francis quote was a **mistake** and describing abortion as the pre-eminent priority is an **incomplete and overly narrow moral criterion**.

Defenseless children unborn and all humans born, have a compelling claim on our consciences as a matter of justice and our duty to protect "the least of these." We must oppose the destruction of the lives of children before birth, and we must recognize the scale and gravity of this issue. And just as children have a special claim on our consciences, so too do those who suffer from the legacy of slavery and continuing racial injustice have a unique claim on our consciences and action. We must be clear that Black Lives Matter, especially when Black Americans are being killed before our eyes. When Covid-19 led to the deaths of more than 1,000,000 Americans, when an economic crisis, health and other disparities disproportionately threaten the poor, vulnerable and communities of color, I believe the protection of the lives and dignity of all God's children should be the moral imperative in every election year.

In January 1973, the Supreme Court issued a 7–2 decision ruling that the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides a "right to privacy" that protects a pregnant woman's right to choose whether or not to have an abortion. But it also ruled that this right is not absolute, and must be balanced against the government's interests in protecting women's health and protecting prenatal life. The Court resolved this balancing test by tying state regulation of abortion to the three trimesters of pregnancy: during the first trimester, governments could not prohibit abortions at all; during the second trimester, governments could require reasonable health regulations; during the third trimester, abortions could be prohibited entirely so long as the laws contained exceptions for cases when they were necessary to save the life or health of the mother. The Court classified the right to choose to have an abortion as "fundamental", which required courts to evaluate challenged abortion laws under the "strict scrutiny" standard, the highest level of judicial review in the United States.

In 1992, the Supreme Court revisited and modified its legal rulings in Roe in the case of Planned Parenthood v. Casey. In Casey, the Court reaffirmed Roe's holding that a woman's right to choose to have an abortion is constitutionally protected, but abandoned Roe's trimester framework in favor of a standard based on fetal viability, and overruled Roe's requirement that government regulations on abortion be subjected to the strict scrutiny standard.

In June 2022, the Supreme Court reconstituted by Trump and Co. somehow justified overruling Roe and Casey in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization on the grounds that the substantive right to abortion was not "deeply rooted in this Nation's history or tradition", nor considered a right when the Due Process Clause was ratified in 1868, and was unknown in U.S. law until Roe. It's up to the States to decide. Damn precedent! Damn the Constitution's right to privacy! Damn majority rule!

Look at the results. Since Dobbs, abortion in the U.S. have increased! To over 1,000,000 abortions...the highest in 10 years! **No doubt, voting matters!**

[What immoral, prejudiced and deranged Heritage-Foundation-fostered bullshit this is! It will take years to correct this by law and by a resurrecting a competent, unbiased Supreme Court.]

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Finally, a few more thoughts:

- A usually ignored statement from Pope Benidict XVI's encyclical letter of 2005 DEUS CARITAS EST: *This is where Catholic social doctrine has its place: it has no intention of giving the Church power over the State. Even less is it an attempt to impose on those who do not share the faith ways of thinking and modes of conduct proper to faith. Its aim is simply to help purify reason and to contribute, here and now, to the acknowledgment and attainment of what is just.*

The Church's social teaching argues on the basis of reason and natural law, namely, on the basis of what is in accord with the nature of every human being. It recognizes that it is not the Church's responsibility to make this teaching prevail in political life. Rather, the Church wishes to help form consciences in political life

- The consequence of Dobbs is arguably the unfortunate legacy of Catholic U.S bishops politics. No other cultural entity has spent as much money and political capital fueling the war over abortion as the U.S. bishops. No other group has staked its identity during the past half century to a single issue to the same degree as the U.S. bishops!

Sad to say that amid the endless fighting, any serious teaching, any opportunity to persuade, has been lost. We are faced, instead, with inflexible binary choices that do not reflect the majority of people who would prefer a more substantive societal discussion as well as more nuanced politics and laws on the issue. That broad middle, fairly consistent for decades, has always been the lost voice.

- In 2044 the Republican Party created new a narrative for imposing an agenda on Americ spelled out in a 920-page document. It is called Project 2025. It was funded and promoted by the Heritage Foundation, written by conservative [regressive] scholars, and identifies the dramatic changes that will be imposed on the country in a new Republican administration.

Contrasting Project 2025 and Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship demonstrates the moral danger in voting for a Republican president.

- Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship needs a complete overhaul to be a much shorter document.
- [All this on top of the ongoing abuse scandal, is it any wonder people are leaving the Church?]

Why I'm Voting for Kamala Harris

Kamal Harris is a Christian who will not impose her personal beliefs on others who believe differently. Throughout her career Harris has had a very pro-choice track record supporting human life and dignity on numerous fronts. And, she took oaths to support the Constitution and therefore firmly believes that the Constitution protects a pregnant woman's right to choose whether or not to have an abortion. It's not up to the government to decide, state or federal!

Why not Trump/Vance you ask? Trump doesn't have a pro-life track record and he is severely lacking in character, integrity, and ability, let alone pro-life commitments. Yes, he chose JD Vance, which to some think demonstrates Trump's commitment to pro-life. But I think all it means is that he picked a running mate who he thinks will help him win votes. I also believe both Presidential candidates are opportunistic

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(who in politics isn't?) but, in Trump's case, I'm convinced this shows up in his newly minted pro-life stance. He knows it's what's necessary to win MAGA votes. He clearly doesn't respect truly conservative or progressive voters. Since becoming President, we can see by Trump's words, policies and actions how anti-life he is...he lies, he is inconsistent, he is unreliable, and anything he does is highly subject to change based on what's politically convenient for him.

If you're looking for an absolutely anti-abortion candidate, then Trump isn't your guy any more than Harris. He changes his tune with the prevailing position to be elected.

But it's on the other pro-life issues that I find Harris the far superior candidate and Trump the most lacking. In other words, my stance isn't a choice between the lesser of two evils. I'm not simply voting against Trump. I don't consider it morally acceptable to vote against someone. In my personal convictions, I must be able to vote for the person I choose on the ballot.

I will vote for Kamala Harris for what she can do to help us recover and heal, lift those left behind, ensure health care for all, and treat immigrants and refugees with respect. I will not vote for Trump to support his currently convenient position on abortion, but in spite of it.

I find enough that I can affirm and identify with in the positions and record of Harris, so my stance to be with her isn't based in an opposition to Trump. I see Kamala Harris as the person who champions all pro-life issues more effectively and consistently.

I believe that if we call ourselves pro-life, then we must address all of the issues, not just a single primary issue.

Here are 10 ways in which I find Harris more pro-life than Trump.

And, as the father of 2 sons whose families will one day benefit from all of these policies, I can't look them in the eye, say I value them deeply, and then vote for Trump. I won't:

1. All life in God's Creation threatened by Climate Change

Nine years ago, Pope Francis wrote Laudato Sí [Praise Be to You], On Care For Our Common Home, the first papal encyclical to focus on care for creation as a central moral obligation. His groundbreaking letter brought together the call to protect the environment and to defend the "least of these" through an integral ecology that challenges all of us. The letter is a hopeful call to action, holding that climate change is a moral test as well as a scientific reality and policy challenge. We are literally burning and drowning and dying due to the effects of Climate Change.

As someone who believes the best climate policies need individual nation's commitment and cooperation internationally, I see Harris's policies and actions profoundly address Climate Change. I am voting for Harris.

I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump who denies Climate Change is real, who says it is a hoax while he rolls back numerous necessary environmental regulations and refuses to engage with international solutions. I won't.

2. The lives of women who would otherwise get abortions

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For me, anyone who thinks abortion will solve a problem needs their hearts changed. But, I also know it's an impossible decision to make when the reality of an unexpected pregnancy is upending your life, and those you love. And, sometimes an abortion is necessary to save the mother's life, as it is very clear as Senator Gary Peter recounted in his family's abortion story. Deciding to have an abortion is never a simple black and white choice...The mental anguish someone goes through is intense.

Women don't get abortions for fun. The procedure isn't a game. No, women who get abortions do so because they feel like they don't have other options to this pregnancy problem in their lives...they feel that they have no choice. Removing access to abortions by making it illegal won't change that reality. Just voiding Roe vs. Wade, or bankrupting Planned Parenthood, or severely restricting abortion by law won't resolve the reasons behind the 3 in 10 women who will have had an abortion by the time they turn 40.

Studies show preventing abortions through progressive social policies that make healthcare and childcare more affordable, make contraception more accessible (Catholic's use of birth control despite the Church teaching against birth control is for another discussion), alleviate poverty, and support a living wage do the most to create a pro-life culture. Countries where abortion is simply illegal see no change in the abortion rate.

Since Roe v. Wade was passed in 1972, most Republicans have talked a lot about abortion while doing little to make meaningful change in policy. Furthermore, they've opposed or stalled measures that could prevent abortions by targeting the underlying causes, like poverty, education, lack of access to healthcare, and support for single parent and low-income families. In fact, I suspect these reasons contribute to why abortion rates rose under Reagan, rose under the first Bush, dropped under Clinton, held steady under the second Bush, and dropped under Obama. As such, I'm not sure anyone could rightfully say that voting Republican is the best thing to lower abortion rates in this country.

By focusing exclusively on the legal components to restrict abortion and placing judges who will interpret the Constitution their way, while simultaneously opposing these family-friendly social policies to prevent abortions, and that support all human life and dignity, the Republican Party has managed to hold pro-life voters hostage with the promise of outlawing abortion, (which never happened until Trump under any Republican administrations since 1972's Roe v. Wade.) They have actively worked against the best humane policies that would lead to a significant reduction in the 2 million unplanned and some of them unwanted pregnancies each year in the USA....instead they have flooded states with laws severely restricting abortions that have been repeatedly struck down as unconstitutional. Therefore the Republican policies have failed to reduce abortions as much as could be possible. (could this be interpreted as pro-abortion?)

Lisa Regan, Executive Director of the Atlanta based Pregnancy Aid Clinic said in an article in 2019: "...*abortion masks social problems faced by women. If abortion is restricted, the problems faced by women do not go away but will become very visible...to everyone. ...It will require more services to be "ready to walk with them, ready for parenting classes, ready armed with adoption counselors and really good strong adoption programs, good strong parenting programs, mentoring programs, counseling, advocacy..."*

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As someone who believes the best pro-life policies support all human life and dignity, and the best anti-abortion policies prevent abortions rather than make them criminal, I see Harris's policies and actions profoundly address human life and dignity. I am voting for Harris.

I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

3. The lives of all women

Harris's views are superior here because she has solid and clear stances on women's issues, as only a woman can understand...but, the majority of which are aligned with my views. For Harris, it's a simple proposition: our daughters are entitled to the same rights and opportunities everyone's sons. She believes every issue is a women's issue — health care, the economy, education, national security — but women are also uniquely and disproportionately impacted by many policies. As President, Harris will pursue an aggressive and comprehensive plan to further women's economic and physical security and ensure that women can fully exercise their civil rights. Because Harris has a track record of implementing many pro-women policies, I am voting for Harris.

Meanwhile, Trump historically and as the president has demeaned women with his words and actions. I can't look my family in the eye, and say I value them deeply, and then vote for Trump.. I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

4. The lives of refugees and other immigrants

Trump's comments and actions about immigrants and the undocumented, and plans for the border are beyond absurd, they are unconscionable. Separating children from their parents at the border with no plan of reuniting them is not pro-life...its criminal. Caricatures work well in stump speeches, but they rarely reflect reality. People come for the opportunities our country provides. And, after 4 years, it's still a promise unfulfilled to build a wall that Mexico pays for. Does anyone believe that will actually happen? Immigration is not the problem. Trump's cruel nationalistic policies are the problem and not what America is about...we are a country of immigrants!

Harris's stance, however, has shown a balance of the need for security with a compassion for humanity. Her policy proposals prioritize keeping immigrant families intact while making recognized and much needed immigration policy improvements.

Considering the traumatic mess Trump has made. I don't believe the pro-life solution is punishing those seeking a better life. As someone who believes life matters no matter where you were born, I am voting for Harris.

I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

5. The lives of racial and ethnic minorities

For starters, can we acknowledge that "make America great again" is a slogan that only applies to MAGA indoctrinated white men?

- What they call the good old days were days in which women and our neighbors of color couldn't vote or attend integrated schools or college.

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- What they call the good old days were the ones in which the larger public didn't know about police brutality against minorities because we didn't have camera phones or social media.
- What they call the good old days are times in which white men didn't have to admit any privilege or offer seats at any table to those with different lived experiences than theirs.
- What they call the good old days are an era in which my multiracial family couldn't exist.

As such, even apart from Trump's racist and misogynist comments, his slogan itself smacks of an ignorance toward the reality that in the good old days, America was only great for the lives of white men and not others. Trump has shown again and again that he doesn't value the lives of racial and ethnic minorities.

Black Lives Matter...because if black lives don't matter, then no life matters.

As someone who is striving to be an ally to and learner from those with the lived experiences unique to people of color, I am voting for Kamala Harris.

I can't look my family in the eye, and say I value them deeply, and then justify a vote for Trump. I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

6. The lives of religious minorities

I'm a Catholic Christian. The history of this nation is one of privileged Christians...too often privileged white male Protestant Christians...for too long a vicious history of bias against Catholics, Jews, Muslims and other religions. But we were founded as a place in which religious liberty for all was a foundational, a Constitutional, principle. If we place limits on the expression of faith of any group...recently Muslims...then we're eroding religious freedom for all groups – including Christians.

Furthermore, when I consider Supreme Court appointments, I don't trust Trump to appoint those who will uphold and not erode the Constitution and religious freedom in our country. We can't pick and choose which religions we want to protect. We can't insist that the worst examples of Christianity don't represent the whole while arguing that the worst examples of Islam represent all Muslims. That's not who we are as a country. And it is not pro-life when we say that the beliefs of certain faiths, or no faith, matter more or less than others.

As someone who believes the value of life isn't based in how you pray, if you pray, or to whom you pray, I am voting for Kamala Harris.

I can't look my family in the eye, and say I value them deeply, and then justify a vote for Trump. I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

7. The lives of the LGBTQ+ community

I'm not going to get into a religious discussion here, because I doubt anything I say will influence you. That's not the point, anyway. My inclusion of the lives of the LGBTQ+ community affirms that their lives are valuable. I think we can all agree on that, right?

As one who believes the value of life isn't based in who you love or how you identify, I am voting for Kamala Harris.

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As the father of sons whose worth isn't based in their sexuality or gender identity, I can't look them in the eye, say I value them deeply, and then justify a vote for Trump. I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

8. The lives of our armed forces

I don't see the presidency as the place for rookie mistakes, not when the lives of our men and women in uniform are on the line. Trump doesn't understand the culture of the American armed forces. He is incoherent on matters of war and peace. The U.S. military footprint abroad isn't really any smaller than when he was inaugurated, and Trump's actions... Undermining our national security, rupturing relationships and commitments with NATO, killing a top Iranian general, ending the nuclear accord with Iran, ripping up arms control agreements with Russia, moving to an increasingly confrontational stance with China, threatening North Korea with "fire and fury" and then placating Kim Jung Un with "love letters" in spite of his openly hostile development of nuclear weapons and missile systems...all have actually moved the United States closer to a major conflict. Throw in a few other scandals, old and new... Trump's deferments during Vietnam, funneling military funding of ongoing projects to finance "The Wall" that Congress refused to fund, praising Putin and other dictators, the Special Counsel investigation revealing Russian interference in the 2016 United States elections with numerous of his administration officials criminal involvement, Trump's impeachment, exposing state secrets to the Russians in the Oval Office, his inaction in the face of reports of Russian bounties against American troops...and on and on... I can't fathom how someone so woefully ignorant in so many ways regarding foreign policy, and is so openly hostile to our Gold Star families, fallen heroes, Intelligence community and military leaders, is a better alternative.

As someone who believes the best way to honor our troops is to give them a Commander in Chief who respects both them, and the policies and laws pertaining to war and peace, I am voting for Kamala Harris.

As we share with our children about their grandfather's Army and Navy service in WWII, I can't look them in the eye, say I value them deeply, and then justify a vote for Trump. I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

9. The lives of those killed by gun violence

I know pro-life and pro-gun stances often go hand in hand. To me, I consider many Republican pro-gun stances to be anti-life. As someone said, "I'm not here to take away your guns. I just don't want you to be shot by someone who shouldn't have a gun in the first place."

48,830/year in 2021 (up from 38,000 in 2019) AMERICANS DIED FROM GUN VIOLENCE! IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY. The issues are Gun suicide, Kids and Guns, Domestic Violence, Mass Shooting, Community Violence, Police Shooting, Mental Healthcare...

The Republican platform not only stands in favor of the Second Amendment, but even stands against limiting the capacity of magazines. The Democrat platform calls for better enforcement of existing gun legislation, better mental healthcare and advancing other laws to decrease gun violence. To me, this shows a deep value for human life by the DNC over the GOP's value for gun industry lobbies like the NRA.

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As my family asks questions about the increasing gun violence in our country, I tell them that I am voting for Kamala Harris.

I can't look my family in the eye, and say I value them deeply, and then justify a vote for Trump. I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

10. The lives of people with disabilities

Harris's history with people with disabilities shows her esteem for their lives. I am voting for Harris.

Trump's public stance and mocking comments about people with disabilities is appalling and immoral. I can't say I'm pro-life and say I'm with Trump. I won't.

What About the Parties?

Finally, what about the explicitly pro-life or pro-choice elements of the Party Platforms?

Some say Republicans are pro-life and Democrats are pro-choice. (For now, I won't address the Republican party abdicating to Trump's every wish. Its conservative roots have been abandoned for the regressive Trumpism, and it will take decades to recover from Trump hijacking the Republican Party.)

I say both parties embrace some pro-life policies, but neither party is pro-life enough.

I won't sugarcoat it. I don't care for some of the Democratic platform on these issues. Nor do I care for the many portions of the Republican platform that I consider to be anti-life. Truly, I'm convinced that neither party is pro-life enough, not in the fullest sense in which life is demonstrably valued from conception to the grave.

The Democrat's platform affirms a women's right to abortion. I don't like that we have to make this statement, because we failed to lower the rate of abortions. But, neither condemning abortion or shaming those involved with the practice will make any difference in the rates of pregnancy termination. I'd even appreciate a return to a platform years ago when Democrats called for abortion to be rare. Sadly, that was dropped.

The DNC platform goes even further, however, calling for the full repeal of the Hyde Amendment, while the Republican platform calls for the upholding of it. I disagree with both. I support the Hyde Amendment, which bans the use of federal funds for abortion, with exceptions for rape and incest and the life of the mother. But at one point, it also included provisions for the health of the mother, beyond merely if her life were in danger. But currently low-income women are denied the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare if, for example, a continued pregnancy would cause grave and long-lasting health consequences for the mother or a prenatal condition were diagnosed that meant a child would die before birth or shortly after. I believe we can restrict abortion funding – while non-governmental entities stand in the gap to provide those services to women who still choose them – from taxpayers like us, who stand opposed to abortion, without robbing doctors and women of their ability to make medical decisions. It's a fine line, sure, but it makes sense to me. Anything else seems as if we're supporting the abortion choices of wealthier women while restricting them for those living in or near poverty.

Furthermore, I really wish the Democratic platform didn't call for repealing all "federal and state laws and policies that impede a woman's access to abortion." But I don't see them finding success in those

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attempts, and, again, I find lowering the rate of abortion to be more effective at protecting life – both the life of the mother and the life of the child – than blocking abortion access. I'd love for a major political party to work to protect life in a multi-faceted way, but that's not our reality. So, as I see it, the decision isn't between a pro-life candidate (if we can trust Trump's word, which I sincerely doubt) and a pro-choice one. It's between one pro-life approach versus another.

In Conclusion

I didn't write this to change your mind. I wrote this because I wanted to answer what I see as a valid question: How can anyone be pro-life and vote for Kamala Harris?

You might think I have NOT made a solid case for Harris as a viable pro-life candidate, and that's fair. If you are solidly anti-abortion, I hope you won't be quick to dismiss the realities I've shared about why I can't consider Trump to be pro-life either. In other words, I understand how you can look at Harris's track record on abortion and not be able to say, "I'm with her." Really, I get that. I just don't understand how you can look at Trump's track record on not just abortion, but on life issues across the board, and say you're with him. To me, being pro-life can't just be about ensuring that babies are born without also affirming their value throughout their lives by our words, actions, and policies.

If we disagree here, that's okay. You vote your conscience, and I'll vote mine. But, I have to ask...have we've lost the skill of civil discourse, especially in politics? Well, I'm confident we can disagree without being disagreeable. Please prove me right in your comments. While I won't tell you not to speak your voice, I will ask you to leave my home if you can't do so with kindness and decency.

I'm voting for Kamala Harris. And I'm pro-life. Those two realities aren't mutually exclusive.