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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** I started doing the first media interview or ever did was with someone at PBS, Wisconsin. I think she was a student journalist at the time. Yeah.

[00:00:07] **Speaker 2** I don't know if you.

[00:00:08] **Speaker 1** Realize she's so lovely. Yes, it was back in November and she was just so sweet and I was so nervous. And and then this a couple of months ago, I was doing something like on Fox News Live and I came in the studio in Madison and she was there and I was like, Kim, I started with you, and now I'm going on Fox News. Like like what happened?

[00:00:28] **Speaker 2** Yeah, no, she she did a great job. She was one of our student journalists. And we see them move on once they get out of college, and it's always exciting.

[00:00:36] **Speaker 1** Yeah, she was so good.

[00:00:39] **Speaker 2** We're good. All right, can you just talk to me about him?

[00:00:41] **Speaker 1** Okay, perfect.

[00:00:42] **Speaker 2** Well, we'll edit this down. So this is our story that we're doing that's focused largely on turnout. We're trying to do is turnout story for you to see, like what are the issues that are going to change, who shows up for election? And obviously we're in a big one now. What have you seen since since?

[00:00:58] **Speaker 1** DOBBS We know that this is a very emotional and polarizing issue right on on both sides of the aisle. But I think where we see an avenue for pro-life success is that middle ground. So we have the wide, vast majority of folks here in Wisconsin do favor some restrictions on abortion. And that's where we see an avenue to really talk about the value of that life, try to find middle ground. We also know a poll actually just came out this week showing that the vast majority of Wisconsinites support funding for pregnancy resource centers. And that's been our big issue in the pro-life movement for decades. So we're trying to focus on those issues. We're trying to bring the focus back to these women who need care and support. And when we have conversations with voters, that's what we're focusing on.

[00:01:58] **Speaker 2** Obviously, there's been controversy and discussion about possibly overturning Roe for forever, for both of our lifetimes. And there are a lot of people who are saying, well, if that ever happened to be the equivalent of like the dog catcher in the car, you know, what would occur? What would happen at that point could have handle it. Can you think the pro-life movement handle this moment and actually keep momentum going forward?

[00:02:20] **Speaker 1** The pro-life movement has been building the infrastructure for this moment for generations. Again, here in Wisconsin, we have nearly 100 pro-life pregnancy resource centers providing free care to women. They are seeing a massive increase in in clients and women who need that care. So I think we are ready, but now we need to truly engage that everyday voter who might not know about those centers down the street, who might not know about the needs that women in Wisconsin face. So we're ready. We're prepared. But it's just a a time to activate and ensure that our message is is correct in this moment.

[00:02:59] **Speaker 2** Is there a risk that there could be some people who support your movement, they support the jobs decision, and they go, we won. And now now I don't have to worry anymore.

[00:03:07] **Speaker 1** Absolutely. We've we've seen that people are, of course, are rejoicing and happy, but then they think that it's time to go home and stop talking about this. But it's more important now than ever before. Again, we have women in Wisconsin who are in dire need. They have concerns about health care, housing. They want to choose life for their baby, but they are in need of assistance. And I think that's the role of the pro-life movement to be leading that charge. This is our mission. We care about these women and we need to show that.

[00:03:42] **Speaker 2** For so many years before this, the focus of the pro-life movement was around restrictions surrounding the actual abortion procedure and the health of the mother and the clinic setting and all of those other questions. And now a lot of those are simply off the table. And obviously, you're setting the focus on the other issues that a lot of other people are bringing up, saying, well, if you are pro-life, then what about child care for mothers? So do you think there's room and especially in the Republican caucus, since they were leading the charge, you know, in the next led legislative session to focus more on those issues? Or will there still be battles over the 1849 law or incest and the life of the mother and clarifications on those kind of issues?

[00:04:24] **Speaker 1** I think our best way to move forward is on the unifying issue of pregnancy resource centers, having conversations about paid family leave. These are bipartisan issues. Again, the majority of the American public supports funding for pregnancy resource centers. That's a powerful number. That means we can reach across the aisle and truly work on these issues, truly make a difference for women. Of course, we know it will be an ongoing conversation about our current law on the books. We know that our governor and attorney general unwilling to enforce it. It's in the courts. So that conversation is certainly not over. But I always like to point out here at Wisconsin, Right to Life, we have always talked about not only a restriction on abortion, but we've always focused on support for parents. So we've talked about parents who have children with Down's syndrome and what the needs that go into that. And those bills have also been vetoed by Governor Evers. So this has always been something that we focus on. At the same time, the restrictions on abortion, but also the support.

[00:05:33] **Speaker 2** In the past, the some of the pregnancy care centers had been targeted by liberals or Democrats as being well, they're going to push women towards having a baby and not giving them actual choice. Now that some of that part of the argument is no longer relevant, this is no longer legal in Wisconsin. Do you think some of the emphasis or the focus of those care centers will shift in how they talk to women? Since the the big question before was about the choice or not having a choice, now that's not even on the table. Now it's about what? What do you actually plan to do?

[00:06:05] **Speaker 1** Absolutely. I think the reality is we know that we're close to Illinois. Right. It's a matter of a couple hours, especially for the southern part of the state. So pregnancy resource centers are aware they're aware that women can obtain chemical abortion pills through the mail, that they can cross into Illinois or Minnesota. So they're aware of that when they're having those discussions. But ultimately, they know that what they're offering women is a better option. It's life affirming, it's holistic. It includes care for for the baby, for the mother. And so many women truly find healing at these pregnancy resource centers. So I think they can stand on their own with that message. They're aware that that option still exists, even if it doesn't exist in the way it once did in Wisconsin.

[00:06:55] **Speaker 2** In regards to the 1849 law that's on the books, does your organization support any amendments or any updates for clarifying the life? What what qualifies as the life of the mother and situations for rape or incest?

[00:07:10] **Speaker 1** We have always believed here at Wisconsin Right to life, that protecting the life of the mother is absolutely vital. So I think there will be further conversations about that medical emergency language, ensuring that it does what it needs to do, that women are receiving the life saving care that they need. I think those conversations need to happen and will happen. Our position is we are not in favor of adding a rape and incest exception. Again, those conversations may be forthcoming. It seems like it's a very hot topic, but we would not be the ones leading the charge on that.

[00:07:50] **Speaker 2** In regards to the health of the mother who who should be clarifying the language there, I mean, obviously, organizations coming at it from a certain point of view. But how I guess, how much should doctors be writing the language of when it is medically necessary and under what circumstances of it's obviously failed pregnancy or an ectopic pregnancy or some of those other situations we've already seen nationally?

[00:08:14] **Speaker 1** Absolutely. I think it's very important that we take all of those conversations into account, bring everyone to the table to talk about this. And I think it's more than anything important that we educate on the difference between an abortion and the inadvertent loss of pregnancy. So often when we're talking about these medical emergencies, life saving treatment for mothers, there is that inadvertent loss of pregnancy and loss of life. But that's not the same as an elective abortion. And I think that is the vast majority of cases that we see in the media that we hear about. But there's just a wide misunderstanding of what an abortion is legally in our laws and morally. So that's something where we at Wisconsin Right to Life have to lead that charge as well just to educate and have those conversations.

[00:09:06] **Speaker 2** For years, when pro-life groups were drafting legislation to handle abortion, a lot of the things were focused on feel for the health care, for the life of the mother, for supporting woman in her medical decisions. And the opposite side was saying, Well, know your interfere between a doctor and a woman in her or her choices in the doctor's office. What we've heard lately is a lot of the shift in tone and words that abortion is not health care. So is that actually a different position from where pro-life groups used to be? And is abortion health care? In your group's opinion.

[00:09:40] **Speaker 1** Abortion is absolutely not health care. We're talking about a distinct human life, a human being that is deserving of respect and protection. And again, maybe some of the language has shifted, but that's been our position from day one, from 1973 with. So from from before that, it's a it's a life deserving of protection.

[00:10:04] **Speaker 2** And so is that a semantic difference about whether abortion's health care? Obviously, some of the books that the laws that were on the books that were passed in the Walker area era with your full support, were did talk about health care and how they were to be administered. So that has shifted, right?

[00:10:21] **Speaker 1** Absolutely. I think language is always shifting, but ultimately, at the end of the day, our position has not changed. And the position of the pro-life movement has always been incredibly clear. We're talking about a distinct life from the moment of conception, deserving of protection.

[00:10:39] **Speaker 2** Talk to me a little bit about the different age groups of people that are being motivated by this issue. Obviously, there's older women who have been dealing with this their entire lives. Every election, they understand the importance of this issue. And then there's young women who young voters where the men or women who may be voting on this for the first time in a completely new era. Is there a different message to them when you're doing outreach either on college campuses or just young voters in general?

[00:11:06] **Speaker 1** Absolutely. Our message to younger voters is one of empowerment. We talk often about true empowerment for women. If we think about a woman walking through the doors of Planned Parenthood, ultimately she's going to be offered that one option, and that is an abortion if she chooses. She wants to carry that pregnancy to term. Planned Parenthood isn't going to offer her that support. But in the pro-life movement, that's why we stand behind these pregnancy resource centers. They are the ones walking alongside women, whether there are housing concerns, health care counseling, necessary diapers, whatever that looks like. And we've heard so many firsthand stories from women in the younger generation. We're talking about, you know, college students, women on campus who have been able to find that care and support a pregnancy resource centers. And that is our message to younger voters. The pro-life movement cares about empowering women.

[00:12:10] **Speaker 2** Obviously, we are in Wisconsin and Wisconsin laws that will dictate how we think, how things are handled here. But there have been a lot of stories from other states around the country, Texas and Louisiana and Indiana and Ohio and some of the restrictions that have been put in place or passed into law of their some of them going much beyond what is in place in Wisconsin. Can the word of those kind of laws actually hurt your position here with some people saying, well, that's too far. I'm afraid that's what's going to come here if we vote for a Republican governor and Republicans can pass whatever bill they have. Or are voters drawing a distinction between what how Wisconsin might look at this issue.

[00:12:48] **Speaker 1** Ultimately post Roe? I think voters recognize that each state can have their own conversation on what our laws look like. Right. That's what made this decision from the Supreme Court so monumental. It may look different here in Wisconsin than in Illinois or in Texas, but it is a vital moment for the pro-life movement to ensure that our message is clear and concise. And that's why at Wisconsin, Right to Life, we defend the medical emergency language. We defend the need to protect the life of the mother in these medical emergency cases. So I think it's important for us to just continue on that message, be very clear in what we are fighting for in Wisconsin, and try to drown out the noise from other states, whether it's good or bad.

[00:13:39] **Speaker 2** Yeah. And we've been lots of test cases around the country already, some some statewide votes, some other congressional seats. And there's been a lot of chatter about the Dobbs effect. And Democrats are certainly saying that this is actually a good thing for them, that it's boosting their turnout. Do you believe they're just trying to tell themselves a story or is there some reality behind that?

[00:13:58] **Speaker 1** I think the reality is we know the polling that the majority of Wisconsinites do favor some restrictions. We know that that's an ongoing challenge for the pro-life movement. We need to continue to engage and educate. But ultimately, we have a governor, we have representatives. We have a senator here in Wisconsin who are radical on the issue of abortion. They are in favor of access to abortion at the very last day of pregnancy. And most Wisconsinites simply do not agree with that. So I think that we have a powerful message to make, to talk about that value of life, to talk about the need for pregnancy resource centers. And that's where we can unify voters and help with our turnout.

[00:14:47] **Speaker 2** When it comes to the resource centers. Would you expect to push for a lot more state funding for those?

[00:14:53] **Speaker 1** I think it's a matter of state and federal funding. We've seen, for example, in Texas. They put $55 million for a two year period into funding their pregnancy resource centers, the majority of that federal funds. So it looks different on a state by state level. But absolutely a conversation that we are already having here in Wisconsin. All right.

[00:15:18] **Speaker 2** Anything else that you want to add that you can think of?

[00:15:20] **Speaker 1** I think that's everything.

[00:15:21] **Speaker 2** All right. Can I give you a sense, will your title have a correct?

[00:15:23] **Speaker 1** Yes. Gracie Skog, main legislative director.

[00:15:27] **Speaker 2** All right. Thank you very much. I do appreciate your time. All right. That was not good just because of the lights. A little out. I want to get a room. Okay. So if we can just hang out silent, we're going to record what the room sounds like without us talking. Okay? Got.