

Marking Roe v. Wade anniversary, abortion foes pin hopes on Trump

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Abortion opponents expressed optimism Monday that President Donald Trump's early months in office would advance their cause as hundreds converged on the Kansas Statehouse to mark the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion nationwide.

Trump, inaugurated Friday, has promised to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court with what he has called a "pro-life" justice and has said he would sign anti-abortion measures approved by the Republican-controlled Congress. Even as GOP governors and legislatures enacted a raft of new anti-abortion laws over the past decade, the movement faced a big obstacle from Democrat Barack Obama's eight years as president.

"I have high expectations," said Karin Capron, a 69-year-old retired chemist from the Kansas City suburb of Mission who has been active in the anti-abortion movement for more than four decades. "The more I hear about him (Trump), the more I think he can be very helpful to the pro-life movement."

Longtime anti-abortion activists mixed with private school students and joined prominent state officials at the annual Rally for Life, one day after the 44th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade ruling.

The rally, which is regularly the largest annual political event at the Capitol in Topeka, was

accompanied by worship services and workshops — a prelude to the movement's paramount event, the annual March for Life on Friday in Washington. The rally included prayers for Trump and seeking an end to abortion.

Trump on Monday reinstated a ban on providing federal money to international groups that perform abortions or provide information on the option. The policy has been instituted by Republican administrations and rescinded by Democratic ones since 1984.

The anti-abortion rally has drawn several thousand people to the Statehouse in the past; the crowd Monday had as many as 1,000 people. But a women's march and rally Saturday drew more than 3,000 people — many of them concerned about abortion rights.

Marilyn Ault, of Topeka, now 78, became an abortion rights supporter in the early 1960s after watching a friend recover from an illegal abortion. Ault, who ran the local Battered Women's Task Force, said she recalls fellow abortion-rights activists thinking after the Roe decision, "That was it, and we wouldn't have to worry about it," she said.

Capron, a lifelong Catholic, said she became active in the anti-abortion movement in 1973, following the decision, after seeing a slide show at a church that featured pictures of aborted fetuses. She'd just had a baby, and recalls, "I said, God, I've got to do something."

TPP: Even without TPP, the wheat industry has traded with other countries

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also supported the TPP, saying it would have provided a level playing field and reduced tariffs imposed on U.S. wheat.

The National Association of Wheat Growers and U.S. Wheat Associates issued a joint statement calling Trump's decision "inevitable."

"It is disappointing, however, that until an alternative trade policy is established, export opportunities in the promising Pacific Rim markets that could help U.S. wheat farmers at a time when they need it most are very much at risk," the statement says.

Wheat prices have been low the past year, and many wheat growers were looking for trade help from the administration.

"Without TPP or alternative agreements, U.S. farmers will be forced to the sidelines of trade while losing market share to competitors, including Australia, Canada, Russia and the European Union, which have current agreements or are negotiating new ones with countries outside the network of existing U.S. trade agreements," stated NAWG president Gordon Stoner, an Outlook, Mont., wheat farmer.

"Obviously, we're supportive of trade," said Glen Squires, CEO of the Washington Grain Commission. Roughly 85 to 90 percent of wheat produced in Washington is exported. "Moving forward, we're still going to be supportive of trade."

Even without TPP, the wheat industry has traded with other countries, Squires said.

"If it's not there, we still have to try to compete the best we can in all markets," he said.

Others in agriculture welcomed the news.

National Farmers Union president Roger Johnson said in a statement that he was pleased by Trump's decision.

"For too long, our nation's trade negotiators have prioritized a free trade over fair trade agenda,

leading to a massive \$531 billion trade deficit, lost jobs and lowered wages in rural communities across America," Johnson said. "It's time our country refocuses the trade agenda to prioritize balanced trade, U.S. sovereignty and U.S. family farmers, ranchers and rural communities."

Shawna Morris, vice president of trade policy for the National Milk Producers Federation and U.S. Dairy Export Council, said the TPP had valuable gains, but wasn't a perfect agreement for dairy producers, particularly for market access.

Dairy producers see Trump's decision as an opportunity to directly engage key Asian markets and establish export advances in Japan, Vietnam and Southeast Asia, Morris said.

"Certainly what we can't see is a situation where the U.S. effectively sits back now and lets our competitors run the board in Asia by sewing up all of their own trade agreements without us being at that table," Morris said.

Tracy Brunner, President of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, criticized the withdrawal.

"Fact is, American cattle producers are already losing out on \$400,000 in sales every day because we don't have TPP, and since NAFTA was implemented, exports of American-produced beef to Mexico have grown by more than 750 percent," Brunner said in a prepared statement.

"Sparking a trade war with Canada, Mexico, and Asia will only lead to higher prices for American-produced beef in those markets and put our American producers at a much steeper competitive disadvantage."

R-CALF USA, an independent ranchers' group, applauded Trump's order, saying TPP would have put U.S. livestock producers at a disadvantage.

"It's really a huge relief that now the president of the United States is saying exactly what we've been saying for 20 years," said Bill Bullard, CEO of the organization.

MARCH: 2,000 marchers reported in Walla Walla

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Before the march began, organizers told the protesters that the event was nonpartisan and wasn't geared toward criticizing any specific politicians, but the specter of Trump's inauguration still loomed over proceedings.

On the steps of the courthouse, a series of speakers addressed a crowd flush with homemade signs and fluorescent pink "pussyhats," a reference to recorded comments Trump made in 2005 to an Access Hollywood host about grabbing a woman by her genitalia.

Amanda Hull of Pilot Rock described herself as a "pretty hardcore feminist" and said she was marching because she was already concerned about some of Trump's early actions as president.

Within hours of being sworn in, Trump signed an executive order to "minimize the economic burden" of the Affordable Care Act, which allows government agencies to stop enforcing certain regulations associated with the law.

Katrina Dielman of Pendleton also said the Affordable Care Act was one of the reasons she was protesting, adding that she had family members that benefited from the health care law.

Carrying a pink sign in the shape of a cat's head with the words "We Shall Overcome" (the cat's hair resembled that of the president's), Dielman said she was on her way west to join the Portland Women's March but turned around when she heard there was a march closer to home.

One by one, speakers recited speeches not just addressing women's rights, but also covering racial justice, environmental preservation, police brutality, immigration, access to health care and LGBT rights.

On signs and on shirts, members of the crowd displayed their support for the Dakota Access Pipeline protest, Black Lives Matter and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals immigration program.

Despite the variety of issues the marchers wanted to tackle, women's



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Several hundred people participated in Saturday's Pendleton Women's March.

rights remained central to the reasons many locals decided to march on Pendleton.

Stephanie Williams-Stregge of Hermiston said she was marching on behalf of her 10-year-old daughter, both as a woman and in support of public education.

"Everyone deserves access to public education," she said.

Clad in a Rosie the Riveter outfit, Sarah Short of Pendleton said she used the opportunity to talk about the wage gap between men and women.

Dressed in traditional tribal garb, Carrie Sampson said she was marching for her three young daughters, with special consideration for the higher levels of domestic abuse and sexual assault Native American women face.

As the march drew to a close in the Heritage Station parking lot, protesters gathered to sing "We Shall Overcome" and "This Land is Your Land" before the

crowd dispersed back into town.

Interviewed on Monday, Police Chief Stuart Roberts said the march was "pretty unremarkable" from a public safety standpoint, the only incident coming from some young people trying to join the march and cause trouble before being deterred by the sight of police.

Roberts said organizers met with police when applying for a parade permit for the event and created contingency plans with them.

In his experience, Roberts said the police have never dealt with a political demonstration that large, but he credited the group for sticking to the rules and avoiding conflict.

A similar event in La Grande drew about 250 people, according to the *Blue Mountain Eagle*, and the *Union-Bulletin* reported 2,000 marchers in Walla Walla.

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GRONQUIST: 'He was fun to be around. He was caring'

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people feel like their views meant something.

"I don't think there was a person who met Dennis who didn't like him," Shaffer said. "He is going to be sorely missed."

Gronquist suffered a stroke at his home in July and was flown to a Portland area hospital where he spent a number of weeks in intensive care, according to his brother, Keith Gronquist, who lives in Las Vegas.

Over the past few months, Keith said Dennis' health had been improving — he was gaining weight and looking physically stronger. Keith actually planned to visit in February for Dennis' 70th birthday.

Keith and Dennis Gronquist grew up together in Boardman with their sister, Karen Clough, who now

lives in Heppner. Keith described his brother as "just a good guy," highly respected and warmly regarded within the community.

"He was fun to be around. He was relaxed. He was caring," Keith Gronquist said. "He was pretty much the complete package."

Despite his health, Dennis Gronquist, a Democrat, was re-elected to the Gilliam County Court in November. It may take some time to appoint a new county commissioner, since candidates must be nominated by the county's Democratic central committee.

Gilliam County, however, does not currently have a Democratic central committee chairperson. Therefore, the Democratic Party of Oregon must appoint a temporary chairperson, who will assemble a committee to come up with

three to five nominations.

Judge Shaffer and commissioner Michael Weimar will then appoint someone to fill Gronquist's seat for the full remainder of the four-year term. Shaffer said he hopes to have a county Democratic chairperson in place by the time the Court meets on Wednesday, Feb. 1.

Gronquist's daughter, Megan Proctor, said her father was an ethical man who always did what he thought was best for the county.

"He held the office of commissioner of Gilliam County in the highest regard until the day he died," Proctor said.

Gronquist loved the small towns and communities of Gilliam County, Proctor said. He was progressive in his thinking about the county's economic future, yet equally

adept at reaching across the political aisle.

In fact, it was Oregon's sole Republican congressman, Greg Walden, who issued a statement Monday saying he was proud to call Gronquist his friend.

"As a public servant and a family man, Dennis Gronquist was one of a kind," Walden said. "He worked selflessly for many decades serving his community, and he got things done for the citizens of Gilliam County. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family during this difficult time."

Proctor said her father was a man of the people, who loved his family and loved his friends.

"He was a great guy," she said.

Services will be held for Gronquist at 1 p.m. Sunday at Arlington Elementary School.

HERMISTON: Also approved new parking spaces downtown

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out at the recycled water treatment plant. The city recently spent \$1.4 million emptying the lagoons where the solid waste goes after it is filtered out, and Morgan said with the new treatment plant's stronger filtering capabilities, that will now need to happen every three years.

"It's filling the lagoon much more quickly, and that's not something you want to overflow," he said.

The \$1.5 million equipment would reduce costs down to \$85,000 per year, meaning the investment

would pay for itself in three and a half years.

The rate adjustment the council approved Monday means the average water user (at 11,220 gallons a month) will go from \$27.83 per month currently to \$29.22 in March, while the average sewer user will go from \$23.56 per month to \$24.74 in March.

City councilor Doug Smith said that while the city understands that raising rates are a hardship on people, it also has decades-old pipes that "look like Swiss cheese" and it needs to save up some money to fix them before a

major incident.

"We're trying to do as much as we possibly can with as little as we possibly can," he said.

On Monday the city council also approved new parking spaces downtown. As a "pilot program" for changes in the future, the council agreed to change the parking spaces on the north side of Gladys Avenue between Second Street and

Third Street from parallel parking to diagonal spaces.

The change — which Morgan said was easily reversible if people don't like it — will add four new spaces in front of the library and help address residents' aversion to parallel parking if the parking lot is full.

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