

# Parental notification on abortions advances

House sends its amendments to bill to Senate for review

**STEPHANIE WANG**

[STEPHANIE.WANG@INDYSTAR.COM](mailto:STEPHANIE.WANG@INDYSTAR.COM)

April 5, 2017

The Indiana House on Tuesday passed a new hurdle for young women seeking abortions, adding the possibility for a minor's parents to be notified that she is seeking an abortion without their consent.

Lawmakers voted 75-23 to pass Senate Bill 404. The bill returns to its author, Sen. Erin Houchin, R-Salem, to review the House's amendments.

Some Democrats opposed the measure, which they say impedes the right to obtain an abortion, particularly adding uncertainty for teens in cases of rape or incest.

But some Republicans defended the proposal, saying that as parents, they too would want to know if their daughters wanted to terminate pregnancies.

"Somebody has to care for that young girl," said Rep. Thomas Washburne, R-Evansville.

Minors under 18 must either have parental consent to obtain an abortion, or they can petition the court to waive parental consent for an abortion.

If they petition the court, Senate Bill 404 adds a provision that a young woman's parents would be notified of her intent to seek an abortion before the procedure — unless the judge decides it's in her best interest to withhold that notification. The bill also establishes criminal and civil liabilities for those who may help a minor avoid the parental notification requirements.

House Minority Leader Scott Pelath, D-Michigan City, said it's unclear whether that would penalize, for example, a relative such as an aunt who helps a minor travel to another state for an abortion.

Fellow Democratic Rep. Linda Lawson of Hammond said she worried that adding obstacles to abortion for young women would result in cases of child abuse and neglect.