

Senate sends abortion package to Evers' desk

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A GOP bill to require care for those who survive an abortion is heading to Gov. Tony Evers' desk after clearing a divided Senate this afternoon.

It was one of four abortion-related measure that the body approved today, though Gov. Tony Evers has said he will veto the package and slammed it "nothing more than a distraction" from other priorities.

The "born alive" bill passed the body 17-14 with GOP Sen. Andre Jacque, of DePere, joining all Dems in opposing it. He voted against the bill after his amendment was rejected.

The bill would outline care requirements for children born alive following an abortion or attempted abortion, as well as penalties for physicians who don't adhere to the legislation. But under the bill, the mother of the child who is born alive couldn't be prosecuted. Jacque's amendment would have removed protections for the mother.

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Senate Minority Leader Jennifer Shilling slammed the bill, which she said was based on "outlandish accusations that are not based in facts or science."

"This is the same smokescreen the majority party uses to push abortion out of reach," she said.

But Senate President Roger Roth dismissed Dems' charge that the measure was a restriction on abortion.

"It's not anti-abortion, it's anti-murder," he said.

The Senate also today passed on an 18-13 party-line vote a measure that would ban abortions on the basis of race, sex or disability despite the U.S. Supreme Court declining to review a federal appeals court decision striking down a similar law in Indiana.

The Indiana law would prohibit doctors from performing an abortion if a woman is choosing the procedure because of the fetus' sex or race, or because of a diagnosis of Down syndrome or "any other disability." That language tracks closely with Wisconsin's AB 182, which is now heading to Evers' desk.

But the U.S. Supreme Court last week left in place a 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision striking down the Indiana law. In an unsigned opinion, the court said it intended to "follow our ordinary practice of denying petitions insofar as they raise legal issues that have not been considered by additional courts of appeals."

The body also passed two other abortion-related measures on party-line votes: AB 180, which would require a woman seeking a chemical abortion to be informed that the procedure is reversible at a certain stage; and AB 183, which would ensure abortion providers are not eligible to receive MA dollars.