

No. 8954

**EMERGENCY RESOLUTION CONCERNING
WEBSTER V. REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES**

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court on July 3, 1989, in a 5 to 4 ruling on Webster v. Reproductive Health Services, upheld the Missouri law which restricts women's access to publicly funded abortions, bans state employees from counseling women about the option of abortion, requires expensive and questionable fetal viability tests after the 20th week of pregnancy, and prohibits any state-funded medical facility from performing abortions; and

WHEREAS, the majority of United States citizens are opposed to making abortion illegal, (NEWSWEEK, 7/17/89, Page 15); and

WHEREAS, legislation such as the Missouri law discriminates against poor women who do not have the resources to pay for expensive tests, private abortions, or travel to another state, and therefore threatens the lives of poor women; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court has agreed to hear cases in its fall term that would require parental notification for minors seeking abortions and such notification is most likely to greatly aggravate the negative circumstances of those young women who have difficult or unsupportive relationships with their parents or who already are abused or even molested by their fathers or other family members; and

WHEREAS, making abortion illegal, when many committed Christians do not even agree when life begins, would become coercion and create widespread disrespect and cynicism for what may be an unenforceable law; and

WHEREAS, law has consistently upheld that no person may be required by law to risk one's body for the well-being of another (e.g., no one is required by law to donate a kidney to save the life of another); and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in its 1975 meeting in San Antonio, Texas affirmed, in Resolution 7524, our "respect for differences in the religious beliefs concerning abortion and oppose, in accord with the principle of religious liberty, any attempt to legislate a specific religious opinion or belief concerning abortion upon all Americans";

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 28-August 2, 1989, reaffirms our historic commitment to reproductive freedom for women; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly expresses opposition to the recent Supreme Court decision of Webster v. Reproductive Health Services and opposition to any laws that restrict women's guaranteed access to abortions under Roe v. Wade and to any legal restrictions that unfairly penalize poor and young women seeking abortions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly encourages those members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who support a woman's right to reproductive freedom oppose state or federal legislation which would explicitly or effectively limit the access of any woman to legal and safe abortion counseling and services, and notify their state and national legislators of their views and the action of this Assembly; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly encourages those members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who support a woman's right to reproductive freedom and who are living in states where public health money is not available for legal abortion services, consider financial support of private agencies offering these services to women, regardless of their ability to pay; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly asks the General Minister and President to notify the Governors, State Attorneys General, the President of the United States, members of the U.S. Congress, and the Supreme Court about the action taken by this Assembly, including a copy of this resolution.