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# News Release

## Chair of pro-life caucus introduces bill to protect women from abortion coercion



**Rod Bruinooge**  
*M.P. for Winnipeg South*  
*Depute de Winnipeg-Sud*

(Ottawa) - Chair of the multi-party Parliamentary Pro-Life Caucus, Rod Bruinooge, introduced "**Roxanne's Law**" in the House of Commons yesterday. The Private Members Bill would make it a criminal offence to coerce a woman into having an abortion.

"There are many stories of women being threatened and coerced into having abortions against their will," said Bruinooge, the Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South. "If a woman resists, such coercion may escalate into violence, and even murder. That's what happened to Roxanne Fernando, in whose memory I have named this bill."

Roxanne Fernando was a young woman from Winnipeg who was murdered by Nathanael Plourde (the father of her unborn child) after he failed to convince her to end her pregnancy. In February 2007, Plourde and two friends beat Roxanne brutally and dumped her in a snow bank to die.

"This bill would help protect a pregnant woman who does not want to terminate her pregnancy," said Bruinooge. "No woman should ever feel intimidated to have an unwanted abortion. Anyone who attempts to force a woman to abort her wanted fetus should face consequences."

This legislation would not affect abortion access in Canada. Abortion would still be legal throughout a woman's entire pregnancy.

The Supreme Court of Canada has recognized, 'Pregnancy represents not only the hope of future generations but also the continuation of the species. It is difficult to imagine a human condition that is more important to society.' Canadian law, however, provides no specific protection for pregnant women.

"A compassionate society like Canada cannot ignore the dangerous situations many pregnant women find themselves in when they choose to continue a pregnancy," said Bruinooge.

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