

Rescue Baby Option

(Formulated Spring 2019 – Spring 2022)

Many in our Western society place a high priority on rescuing dogs in distress, which are then often referred to as “rescue dogs.”

Before taking possession of a rescue dog, the new owners are usually required to pay the dog’s veterinary bills and other costs. As a result, the lives of unwanted puppies and dogs are spared, and people receive wanted pets. **A win-win situation.**

A similar scenario is possible for rescuing unwanted/unborn babies. For the last fifty years, women with an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy have had two choices:

1. Complete the pregnancy — and either keep the baby or place the baby for adoption
2. Terminate the pregnancy with a legal abortion

The proposed concept of **Rescue Baby Option** would give these women a third choice.

This **option** offers hope and help to pregnant women who

- do not wish to be a mother at this time, as they are very young,
- are unable emotionally and/or financially to provide for a child,
- do not want to terminate the pregnancy but feel compelled to abort due to their perceived circumstances,
- would welcome financial, and possibly educational, aid during the pregnancy.

This **option** connects these women with potential adoptive parents who

- are unable to become pregnant or carry a baby to term,
- have been unsuccessful with infertility treatments,
- have been on a long wait-list to adopt a child,
- can commit to a legal arrangement so the woman has financial security and emotional support during her pregnancy.

The **Rescue Baby Option** creates a **win-win-win situation**

- *The pregnant woman wins.* She would have a new choice available to her in dealing with the unwanted pregnancy. She also gains the financial support of the adoptive parents.
- *The unborn baby wins.* The child would be given a chance to live and contribute to society. This is important given the declining birth rates and aging population in the Western world.
- *The adoptive parents win.* More babies may become available for adoption, thereby enabling adoptive parents to obtain a baby without the long wait-list.

The **Rescue Baby Option** does not remove any of the current choices for women with an unplanned/unwanted pregnancy. It provides an additional choice.

IMPLEMENTATION

The “post-birth” choice of surrendering an unwanted baby for adoption was passed by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1851. This was long before our Western countries legalized abortion in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The legalization of abortion allowed a woman with an unwanted pregnancy to commit to a “pre-birth” choice and terminate her pregnancy.

However, from 1851 to now, a pregnant woman’s choice to place her unwanted baby for adoption remains a “post-birth” decision. The Rescue Baby Option would allow adoption to become a “pre-birth” choice, as was done for the abortion choice some fifty years ago.

To facilitate the **Rescue Baby Option**, legal and legislative changes would be necessary:

- If, while under the distress of an unwanted pregnancy, a woman is legally entitled to terminate her pregnancy with the “pre-birth” choice of abortion, then, while under the same distress, she should also be legally entitled to the choice of a “pre-birth” adoption.
- If the argument “My Body, My Choice” can be used to solidify the “pre-birth” choice of abortion, then the same argument should be able to be used to legalize the choice of a “pre-birth” adoption.
- Professionals would pre-approve potential adoptive parents, to accommodate the tight time frames of gestation.
- The pregnant woman would have approval rights over who adopts her unborn child. This should be her decision, free from fears of harassment or charges of discrimination.
- The adoptive parents would be able to legally contribute funds to meet the pregnant woman’s basic needs and, if deemed desirable, provide funds for career and/or job training during the pregnancy. This could give the pregnant woman better opportunities for her future, once the pregnancy has concluded.
- To keep this process cost-effective for the benefit of both parties, legal templates would be drawn up, with adjustments for individual objectives, needs, and circumstances.
- The financial goals of the Pre-Birth Adoption Agreement, the PBAA, are threefold:
 - (1) to protect the funds designated for the mother,
 - (2) to ensure the funds expended by the adoptive parents have the desired outcome,
 - (3) to secure the successful conclusion of the adoption.

Today’s Western society is more open to a variety of family types and ways to obtain a baby: donor sperm, donor eggs, *in vitro* fertilization, and donor embryos (some of which are “leftovers” from other people’s *in vitro* fertilizations). Surrogacy is also becoming more accepted.

The **Rescue Baby Option – Pre-Birth Adoption** has the potential to be another viable component of the innovative ways to give or obtain a baby.

If our society today is willing to go to great lengths to rescue an unwanted puppy or dog, are we ready to do what is needed to rescue an unwanted/unborn baby?

The **Rescue Baby Option** deserves consideration.