

Suburban Life

Lorraine McClish editor/477-5450



Monday, November 28, 1983 O&E

(F58)

Surrogate parenting ban: Will it lead to 'black market' babies?

By Tim Richard
staff writer

SEN. PATRICK McCollough, D-Deerborn, thinks the Michigan Senate made a serious mistake in voting to outlaw "surrogate parenting" and is seeking reconsideration of the bill.

"It will result in a black market for children," McCollough warned as the

Senate gave 25-12 approval to Senate Bill 63.

The bill would prohibit the practice, most common among white suburban married couples in their 30s, of paying another woman \$10,000 (typically) to become pregnant by the husband through artificial insemination and then giving up the baby for adoption.

Penalty for first violation would be 90 days in jail and/or a \$10,000 fine,

for subsequent violations, five years in prison and/or a \$10,000 fine.

SUBURBAN SENATORS, split across party and philosophical lines.

Supporting the ban were liberal Democrats like Majority Leader William Faust of Westland and conservative Republicans like Doug Cruce of Troy and Richard Fessler of Union Lake.

Opposed were liberal Democrats like McCollough, whose district includes Garden City, Jack Faxon of Southfield and Philip O. Mastin of Pontiac and conservative Republican R. Robert Geake of Northville.

The bill now goes to the House. Surrogate parenting was denounced as making the child "essentially a commodity to be bought and sold" by Sen. Connie Binsfeld, R-Maple City, the bill's author. She is one of two women in the Michigan Senate.

McCollough and other opponents prefer House Bill 4114, which would regulate the practice and protect the natural mother and child by making surrogate parent contracts enforceable in court.

"THERE ARE 40 couples now arranging them (surrogate contracts) and there have been about 200 born" in the state, Binsfeld said in floor debate.

Estimates of the number of women now pregnant under surrogate contracts range from 15 (Binsfeld) to 30 (Senate analysts' office).

There is agreement about why surrogate contracts are popular: More abortions and more single mothers keeping their babies have reduced the supply of adoptable white babies.

The result is an eight- to 10-year wait — "and many childless couples in their 30s feel they can't wait."

Today Michigan laws prohibit natural parents from giving a child away without the process of Michigan's adoption laws," Binsfeld said. "It is a fact that today Michigan law prohibits the exchange of money, buying or selling of a child."

BINSFELD OBJECTS even to the term "surrogate."

"Surrogate" means substitute, and that she (the natural mother) is not. In these arrangements, it is her ovum that is fertilized, her genes; it is her child."

A "true surrogate," she said, occurs in the animal kingdom when "the ovum is taken from the prize cow. The sperm is taken from the prize bull, and it is put into a scrub cow for a gestation period. . . That is true surrogate."

Supporters of Binsfeld's bill argued that surrogate parenting places dangerous emphasis on producing a "perfect child." They cite an outstate case where a deformed child born to a surrogate mother was rejected by the man who had contracted for it. (He later was able to prove the true father was the surrogate mother's husband.)

Supporters also argued there are plenty of older children, children in sibling groups and handicapped children who could be adopted.

McCOLLOUGH confessed he had opposed surrogate parenting until he met several surrogate mothers, adopting parents and their "happy, gurgling babies."

It occurred in a hearing conducted by his Health and Social Services Committee last spring on the University of Michigan-Deerborn campus. The mothers, couples and babies were brought in by Deerborn attorney Noel Keane, who handled much of the legal work.

"It was hard for me to persuade myself that what they were doing was criminal," McCollough said.

Other opponents of SB 63 concurred when McCollough said the bill "pretended to solve a problem by making a contract illegal," but which actually "solved no problem at all."

"It didn't deal with the reality of a modern society where people can travel a few miles to another state and make arrangements to become parents."

"All we have done by adopting this ban is deny access to the courts for

'All we have done by adopting this ban is deny access to the courts for those involved.'

— Patrick McCollough



those involved. I think the process needs regulation, having heard testimony on it. I believe the profit can be eliminated from it, but I do not believe the process should be subverted."

McCollough predicted the ban would result in an interstate "black market" in babies.

LANA POLLACK, D-Ann Arbor, the only other woman senator, opposed the Binsfeld bill, arguing that artificial insemination and adoption are two facts of life that should be faced.

"These people are highly motivated to become parents," Pollack said. "I think it's wrong for government to try

to prevent people from having their own children."

"The burden is on the opponents of this procedure. They have not yet shown psychological, emotional or economic damage being done to these children," she said.

Supporting SB 63 were: the Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; Michigan Catholic Conference; Michigan Federation of Private Child and Family Agencies; Probate Judges Association of Michigan and Right to Life of Michigan.

Opposed were the American Civil Liberties Union and Michigan chapter of the National Organization for Women.



Santa Claus is coming to lunch

Preparations are under way in Farmington Community Center in anticipation of Santa's arrival when the staff will host the annual Santa Luncheon Friday through Sunday, Dec. 2-4.

Chairperson Gerry Tobin, assisted by Dianne Paul, is making arrangements for the festive center tradition which includes lunch, entertainment, and this year a very special "Kids Only Boutique" hosted by the Farmington Hills Junior Womens Club.

Santa will be on hand to listen to special Christmas wishes. Individual or family pictures with Santa are \$2 each.

Lunch is \$3.50 per person and will be served by Santa's elves at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. each day. On the menu are pizza, juice, and "Goodie Bags" filled with special surprises.

Arnette Whitehouse and Sandra Donlon are co-chairing the "Kids Only Boutique."

Boutique items are all in the 25 cent to \$2 price range made, designed or grown by the club members and arranged for very easy shopping. Signs will lead the youngsters to displays that are marked specifically for the child who looking for a gift for a parent, grandparent, friend, teacher, or even a pet.

Kid shoppers, whether they have a reservation for lunch or not, are invited to shop in the "Kids Only Boutique" from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Friday through Sunday. The young shoppers will be assisted by the center volunteers.

Advance reservations are necessary by calling the center, 477-8404.



Five-year-old Lindsay Cole (at left) and 6-year-old Alissa Centivany are the first to try out Santa's lap for his annual visit to Farmington Community Center when area youngsters are invited to "Lunch with Santa." Christine Donlon (standing) is one of about a dozen young teens who will be Santa's elf-helpers for his three-day visit.

RANDY BORST/staff photographer

INVITATION

J. TIKTNER SPRING/SUMMER COLLECTION

Thursday, December 1
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Birmingham

Inspired by the natural brilliance of the skies and Mediterranean waters off the South Coast of France, her collection of relaxed looks glows with color. Suits and dresses. Tropical print swimsuits and beach wear. Linens, cottons, silks and wool gabardines. Hot pink with fuchsia, blue with purple, ivory with cocoa.

Sizes 4-14.

Typically Tiktner

We show, from the collection, her cotton/linen separates in geranium with taupe dots: blouson jacket, sleeveless blouse and drop waist skirt.



Jacobson's

FOR YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING CONVENIENCE, NEW EVENING HOURS:
MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY UNTIL 9:00 P.M., SATURDAY UNTIL 6:00 P.M.