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As commercial gestational surrogacy becomes more common around the globe for individuals and couples unable or unwilling to carry children to term, Human Life Alliance repeats its opposition to legislation which enables this dangerous process for women.

Recently we've heard advocates share stories about the ultraistic benefits of surrogacy, but HLA believes our medical and social systems are not prepared to help women through the physical, emotional and financial consequences of commercial gestational surrogacy.

Little information is published about negative effects on women who act as surrogates. These women, commercial gestational surrogates, are at risk of coercion from parents and others who seek to pressure them into abortion when things go wrong. When multiple embryos are implanted to increase chances for success or when a fetus is diagnosed with a condition the parents are unwilling to support, "selective reduction" is recommended. This is simply a euphemism for killing the "extra" or "unwanted" children already developing in the womb.

International surrogacy has its own special issues. When couples, typically Western couples, rent out a surrogate's uterus, pay for the IVF procedure and then reimburse a women for the actual time of gestation, we see fees as high as \$125,000 per child today. This not only risks the chance of viewing children as a modern day commodity, but I ask you what percent of these dollars actually get paid to the surrogate herself? The pressure on many women to accept this income is immense. These fees are often more money than women in developing nations could hope to earn in a lifetime.

Some commercial gestational surrogates report feeling pressured into surrogacy by their own family members to make extra money. Many of these women are unable to read the contracts they're required to sign, are kept in locations under lock and key and forced to deliver by cesarean section (which represents a much high risk for the surrogate). There is no guarantee the women will receive the full payment promised when the child is delivered. In the event implantation of multiple embryos is achieved and the purchasing couple only wants one child, the other babies may be sold on the black market to anyone willing to pay the price—both the mother and original contracting parents have no idea this has happened to one or more of their biological children.

With the potential moral dangers and obvious financial pitfalls, HLA asks you to weigh the societal risks of encouraging commercial gestational surrogacy. Why does it seem like there's an outpouring of support for commercial gestational surrogacy today? As a fertility awareness instructor of 13 years, I'm a husband and father who struggled with fertility issues. It's easy to understand the heartfelt need of couples seeking to start a family, but I suggest to you a financial component drives this new public policy push for commercial gestational surrogacy. With costs peaking at \$125,000 per birth and surrogates receiving on average \$20,000 - \$35,000 (some say \$12K to \$25K) per birth, I ask you to think

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about this equation and recall the phrase often used for any industry investigated for abuse, "Follow the money."

For these reasons and more, Human Life Alliance continues to stand by our original resolution on surrogacy as adopted in 1987:

WHEREAS the practice of surrogate motherhood dehumanizes and depersonalizes both woman and child, reducing the essence of humanity into raw material which can be manipulated, commercialized and expended, and

WHEREAS the practice of surrogate motherhood undermines the sanctity of life, recommending abortion in most contracts if the unborn child is expected to have handicaps, and

WHEREAS the practice of surrogate motherhood exploits women, treating the biological mother as a mere receptacle, denying her natural inclinations toward bonding family life, and

WHEREAS the practice of surrogate parenting strikes at the integrity of marriage, motherhood and fatherhood, all necessary foundations for healthy families and a healthy society,

BE IT RESOLVED that Human Life Alliance opposes any legislation which would recognize or legalize the practice of surrogate parenting, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Human Life Alliance calls upon members of the Minnesota Legislature to ban the practice of surrogate parenting.

Passed by the Coordinating Committee of Human Life Alliance September 14, 1987.