



# 'Surrogacy universal crime' bill moves ahead in Senate

And Gasparri pushes 'maternity income' to stem abortions

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A bill that would make surrogacy a universal crime moved forward in the Senate Wednesday while a center right Senator filed a bill to give 1,000

euros a month for a year to low-income pregnant women who agree not to have abortions.

The surrogacy bill, which was approved by the upper house justice committee on Wednesday after approval by the lower house last month, recently saw a rightwing League amendment saying using surrogate mothers should be punishable by 4-10 years in jail and a fine of 600,000 to two million euros.

Premier Giorgia Meloni's rightwing Brothers of Italy (FdI) party bill would make surrogacy a "universal crime", even abroad, hopefully and controversially ending a practice that is widely used by Italian gay couples in the US, Spain and other countries.

The League's further stricture against surrogacy includes punishing the public official who registers the children born from that practice.

Both Meloni and League leader Matteo Salvini have described the 'babies for sale' practice of paying allegedly vulnerable women and depriving infants of their natural mothers as "abominable".

The centre-left opposition is fighting the bill.

Meanwhile centre right post Berlusconi Forza Italia (FI) Senate Whip Maurizio Gasparri launched the bill to pay poor pregnant women 1,000 euros a month for a year not to terminate their pregnancies in Italy, saying this 'maternity income' was a "good incentive to protect the unborn child".

The government has already controversially allowed access to abortion information services to pro-life activists.

It is notoriously difficult to get an abortion in Italy already with over two thirds of the country's doctors morally or religiously opposed to the procedure.