I'm afraid that this really does make me laugh [1]

Written by **Tim Worstall** [2] | Wednesday 17 July 2013

I agree that this shouldn't make me laugh of course. Abortion is such a serious subject that let us simply ignore that this story is about that subject. Instead, let us look at what Texas has just done [3]:

> Requirements for wider hallways, janitor closets and back-up generators will likely be the downfall of Amy Hagstrom Miller?s abortion business in Texas. Texas lawmakers last week approved a law requiring that abortion clinics become hospital-like outpatient surgical centers, with detailed rules for how the buildings are designed. Owners of the state?s 36 clinics, including five run by Miller, would need to spend millions of dollars to comply -- adding features such as showers, single-sex locker rooms and special airflow systems -- or either relocate or shut down.

As I say, leave aside the specific subject itself and look at the tactic that has been used. For one can trace through American politics and law making a definite strand of those who insist upon more regulation and those who insist that excessive regulation kills businesses.

We could think of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for example, something that insists that all public (by which they mean private business premises as well) must be disabled accessible. Which might be just fine but it is also true that there will very definitely be expenses connected with conforming to such regulations. And the businesses that complain about those have been told to just suck it up and stop complaining. Or we might look at the insistence that restaurants must provide calorie counts on the menu. Perhaps that cost is trivial but it is still a cost which the regulators have happily forced upon such businesses. There are, of course, myriads of such regulations and costs.

And what has me giggling here is that the positions are reversed from their general set up. Being against regulations because of the costs to business is, in the US, generally a "right wing" view. As is, to a very large extent, being anti-abortion. Being pro-regulation whatever the cost is a more lefty position, as is being more pro-choice. Here it is, largely, the right imposing those regulations upon something supported by the left: and my, aren't they shouting about it?

It isn't, of course, a principled stand by the righties: not a bit of it, it's a tactic to do down their perceived ideological enemies. But I'm afraid that I do still find it amusing, it's a sort of political ju-jitsu. You like regulations, well, here, have some regulations.

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