

**Fact Sheet**  
**#ProtectRoe**

**The fundamental right to abortion was established 45 years ago in the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision.**

- Based on the current makeup of the Supreme Court, the loss of just one judge could result in *Roe v. Wade* being overturned.
- If *Roe v. Wade* were overturned, only 17 states protect the right to abortion either in the state constitution or state statutes.

**Despite the constant attacks on the right to abortion, the majority of Americans still believe the decision in *Roe v. Wade* should be law.**

- In poll, after poll, around 70% of people across the country believe that *Roe v. Wade* should not be overturned. [Gallup](#), [Pew](#), [Public Leadership Institute](#)
- Despite public opinion, since *Roe v. Wade*, and in particular since 2010, hundreds of abortion restrictions have been introduced and enacted making abortion harder to access.

**However, in recent years local and state policy makers and advocacy groups have been more proactive in their attempt to secure abortion rights.**

- Despite the chipping away of this fundamental right, in recent years we have seen an increase in the introduction of proactive abortion rights policies.
- In 2016, 88 proactive abortion rights bills were introduced and in 2017, 133 bills were introduced, a 67% increase in one year. [Public Leadership Institute](#)
- The introduction of proactive abortion rights policies must be a central component of any agenda, even in jurisdictions controlled by conservatives.
- Only a proactive strategy makes news, frames the debate, and dictates timing.
- And only a proactive strategy forces the opposition to shift their resources and calls them out on their hypocrisy.

**Currently, in many parts of the country, abortion is a right in name, but not in reality.**

- The number of abortion clinics has declined by about 40 percent over the past three decades.
- Today, almost 90 percent of counties in the United States do not have an abortion provider and 38 percent of women of reproductive age live in those counties.
- Four states have only one provider and at least ten states have three or fewer providers.

**Despite recent declines, abortion is a common experience for U.S. women.**

- One in four women will have an abortion by the end of her reproductive years.
- At 2014 rates, one in 20 (5%) U.S. women will have had an abortion by age 20, one in five (19%) by age 30 and one in four (24%) by age 45. [Guttmacher Institute](#)

### **Lack of access to abortion procedures put women's safety at risk.**

- Women forced to have an unwanted baby after seeking an abortion are more likely to remain in a relationship with an abusive partner and less likely to have or achieve aspiration life plans such as finishing school as compared to women who obtain an abortion. [BMC Medicine](#), [BMC Women's Health](#)

### **Abortion is one of the safest medical procedures in the United States.**

- Aspiration abortion, for example, causes no complications in 99 percent of cases.
- Medication abortion causes no complications in more than 99.9 percent of cases, making it safer than Tylenol, aspirin and Viagra.

### **It is essential that the full spectrum of reproductive health care including abortion is accessible.**

- Empowering individuals to decide whether to have a family and to plan and space their family.
- Avoiding unintended pregnancy.
- One in four women will have an abortion by the end of her reproductive years.
- For example, evidence shows that individuals who are able to obtain an abortion are better able to maintain a positive future outlook and achieve their aspirational life plans.
- Conversely, evidence clearly demonstrates that if a woman seeks an abortion and access is delayed or denied, she is at greater risk of experiencing adverse health and economic outcomes.

### **Abortion is an essential component of health care for a variety of women for many reasons.**

- A five-year examination of the effects of unintended pregnancy on women's lives by ANSIRH (Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health) found that the main reason women terminate their pregnancies is because they can't afford to have a child.
- Abortion is an essential component of healthcare for women who face medical problems, for example, a woman who is diagnosed with cancer in the middle of pregnancy and must make a choice between obtaining an abortion or forgoing life-saving chemotherapy.
- Abortion is an essential component of health care for young women who become pregnant. For example, a young woman who must make a choice between obtaining an abortion or run the risk of enduring severe, lasting damage to her physical health.
- Abortion is an essential component of health care for women who experience major problems in pregnancy. For example, a woman who finds out that her fetus would only live for a few hours past birth and carrying that pregnancy to term might severely damage her ability to bear other children in the future.

**The practice of abortion care, like all health care, should be driven by evidence-based standards developed and supported by medical professionals.**

- Unfortunately instead, patients and providers are required to overcome numerous barriers erected by abortion opponents. These barriers—waiting periods, so-called “counseling” requirements, bans on insurance coverage, limits on who can perform abortions, and TRAP laws—are not intended to protect a woman’s safety, they are designed to coerce women into giving birth to unwanted children; They serve no purpose other than to make abortion more difficult and expensive;
- When abortion opponents argue for onerous regulations and procedures, they are treating abortion care as if it is a separate issue apart from health care;
- States have spent millions of dollars defending unconstitutional anti-abortion rights legislation. [REWIRE](#)