

Op-Ed: [State] Must Step Up to Protect Roe

Forty-five years ago, the United States Supreme Court ruled that among the fundamental freedoms guaranteed by our nation's Bill of Rights, women had the right to decide for themselves whether to have an abortion.

This famous decision, *Roe v. Wade*, has been under attack ever since by interest groups and politicians who want to impose their personal religious beliefs about abortion on everyone else. That's no exaggeration—their whole point is to enshrine their religious doctrine into our states' and nation's criminal law.

Donald Trump, who previously claimed to be "[very pro-choice](#)," is in the curious position of leading the fight to repeal *Roe*. And if one of the more moderate Justices dies or retires, Trump may very well succeed.

But whatever the Supreme Court does in the coming years, states still control their own criminal laws. If *Roe* was overturned, individual states would decide whether women have access to legal abortion. That's why it is essential for our state to pass its own legislation to protect women's rights under *Roe*.

This year [insert legislator names] have joined with lawmakers in XX states to introduce and push [name of legislation], and similar proactive legislation, guaranteeing access to legal abortion care.

Abortion policy is not a question of safety. In fact, it is one of the safest procedures a woman can undergo. 99 percent of aspiration abortions are performed with no complications. 99.9 percent of medication abortions have no complications, making this medicine substantially safer than aspirin, Tylenol or Viagra.

Abortion policy is not a question of popular will. Poll after poll finds that about 70 percent of Americans favor upholding *Roe v. Wade*, while substantial majorities also support state laws to protect staff and patients at abortion clinics from harassment, prevent anti-abortion crisis pregnancy centers from lying to pregnant women, and ban employment discrimination that is based on women's choices over contraception or abortion.

No, the abortion policy in our state is a matter of power. Should politicians have the power to decide whether and when you, your friends and neighbors become parents? Or should this decision—as I suggest—be left to individual women and their families?

I think we can all agree that abortion is a complex issue for those involved. Let us not interfere with their fundamental freedom to weigh their own situations, apply their own religious beliefs, and make their own decisions about the most private and personal aspects of their lives.

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