

# Gov. Pritzker Signs Legislation To Further Protect Reproductive Rights

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SPRINGFIELD – Building on efforts to make Illinois a national leader in safeguarding reproductive rights, Governor JB Pritzker signed House Bill 370, repealing the harmful Parental Notification Act (PNA). Rescinding the PNA ensures that while a pregnant minor can choose to involve a family member or legal guardian in their decision to have or not have an abortion, vulnerable youth – such as victims of rape, incest, and domestic abuse – are not compelled to do so under the law.

“With reproductive rights under attack across the nation, Illinois is once again establishing itself as a leader in ensuring access to healthcare services,” said Governor

JB Pritzker. "This repeal was essential, because it was the most vulnerable pregnant minors who were punished by this law: victims of rape and physical abuse in unsafe homes. I thank Representative Anna Moeller, Senator Elgie Sims and the lawmakers and advocates who have fiercely fought to repeal this law and keep vulnerable young people safe. I'm proud that Illinois continues to be a national leader in protecting reproductive rights."

The Parental Notification Act of 1995 required doctors to notify a pregnant minor's parent within 48 hours prior to an abortion procedure. This obstruction harmed the state's most vulnerable youth, including victims of rape and domestic abuse, by preventing young people from accessing all of their healthcare options without fear.

"With reproductive rights under attack around the country, today we are once again affirming that in Illinois, access to reproductive healthcare will be available to those who need it," said State Representative Anna Moeller (D-Elgin). "With the signing of the Youth Health and Safety Act, we are protecting the most vulnerable young people in our state- young people who live in such dangerous family situations that they fear abuse, homelessness or forced pregnancy and marriage when they face an unplanned pregnancy and need to access reproductive healthcare. I am grateful to Governor Pritzker for signing this legislation, my colleagues in the Illinois House who voted for this bill, House Speaker Chris Welch, House Chief of Staff Tiffany Moy and Brigid Leahy at Planned Parenthood, Khadine Bennett at the ACLU and Terry Cosgrove at Personal Pac for their tireless advocacy on this issue."

"While several states are denying women access to reproductive health care, Illinois has again stepped forward to protect that right," said State Senator Elgie R. Sims (D-Chicago). "Current law causes harm by placing barriers to care for young women in unsafe family situations. Personal decisions about reproductive health care will now rightfully be up to individuals and their health care providers."

"After years of work, the Youth Health and Safety Act successfully repeals the last anti-abortion law on the books in Illinois," said Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch (D-Hillside). "With the Governor's signature, we are ensuring that everyone, regardless of age, has bodily autonomy and can choose who they involve in their most private and personal health decisions. I want to congratulate Reps. Anna Moeller and Kelly Cassidy for their tenacious advocacy, working alongside organizations like Planned Parenthood, ACLU and many more to ensure Illinois sends the very clear message that we will always protect the right to safe reproductive health care."

"Access to sexual and reproductive health care starting at a young age is crucial," said State Senator Melinda Bush (D-Grayslake). "By providing resources and education, we are giving young girls vital information to allow for free expression and bodily

autonomy. The signing of House Bill 370 signals to young women that we are prioritizing them today and for generations to come.”

“When the Texas legislature, aided by the United States Supreme Court, declared open season on people seeking reproductive health care, it became very clear to me that our state is in a unique position to reach out our hands and offer a safe haven to people from Texas and other states that seek to restrict reproductive rights,” said State Representative Kelly Cassidy (D-Chicago). “By repealing the Parental Notice Act, we can ensure that the most vulnerable among us are able to safely make the best decision for their own health and safety.”

To ensure lasting change, the bill also creates the Youth Health and Safety Advisory Working Group to identify laws and policies that impact parenting and pregnant youth under the age of 18. Under the purview of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the group will focus on reproductive safety for pregnant and parenting youth as well as preventing human trafficking. The working group will discuss topics around consent to medical care, treatment, pregnancy and post-pregnancy, and healthcare provisions. The Governor will appoint four members with at least two members under the age of 18. The advisory group is required to present a report and any recommendations by July 1, 2023.

“The Parental Notice of Abortion was designed to restrict access to abortion without regard for the harm suffered when essential health care is denied,” said Colleen K. Connell, executive director of the ACLU of Illinois. “We saw that unnecessary harm PNA inflicted on young people, including young people forced to parent, kicked out of their homes, fearing physical and verbal abuse and losing the opportunity to finish high school or go to college. Over the past eight years, we have represented hundreds of young people forced to go to court and share the most personal aspects of their lives with a stranger. Repealing PNA at this critical moment continues the effort in Illinois to ensure that all people have the ability to make their own reproductive health care decisions. With courageous champions the House and Senate – and leadership in the Governor’s office – Illinois can continue to be a beacon for reproductive freedom across the country.”

“As a volunteer judicial bypass attorney who has represented more than 35 young women who face violence, physical and emotional abuse, sexual assault, and devastating trauma in their homes, Governor Pritzker has my deepest appreciation for signing this repeal and putting an end to this dangerous and unjust law,” said Melissa Widen, Personal PAC Board Member. “We should all be proud of Illinois’ leadership in protecting, rather than harming, the health and lives of our young people.”

“Thank you Governor Pritzker for signing the Youth Health and Safety Act into law,” said Jennifer Welch, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood Illinois Action.

“Together, we’re ensuring that young people can involve whomever they trust in their health care decisions, protecting them from harmful domestic situations and unnecessary judicial interactions. At a time when reproductive rights are hanging by a thread across the country, today’s bill signing means that in Illinois, regardless of age, people now have the full legal autonomy to make reproductive health care decisions that are best for their bodies.”

“It takes a village to make a movement like this,” said the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health. “Youth especially were the game changers every step of the way as a necessary voice and for constantly reminding adult accomplices that to #TrustYouth is to advocate WITH and FOR youth. Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health cannot thank youth organizers enough for putting in the work to get us to this point and believing in us to achieve this repeal. We especially need to give a shoutout and thank you to ICAH Youth Leaders Hannah and Taylor who testified!”

“Thank you, Governor Pritzker, and all of the incredible representatives of Illinois who worked so hard to make this happen,” said the Chicago Abortion Fund. “Having the Youth Health and Safety Act signed into law will be transformative for the young people who call the Chicago Abortion Fund helpline and allow them to have full autonomy over their reproductive decisions. We trust youth! Illinois trusts youth! The repeal of PNA represents an essential step forward in an increasingly hostile abortion care landscape in the United States. Illinois must continue to be a model for abortion access across the nation - so many futures depend on it.”

This legislation builds upon the administration’s commitment to ensure all residents have access to basic health care and family planning with the freedom to make their own choices. In 2019, Illinois established in state law a fundamental right to reproductive healthcare, including abortion and maternity care, through the Reproductive Health Act. In July of 2021, Illinois became the second state in the Midwest to require birth control be available through a pharmacist, without a doctor’s visit.

Amid a wave of legislation and court action across the nation restricting a woman's right to choose, more out-of-state patients are now traveling to Illinois to receive reproductive care. According to the most [recent data](#) from the Illinois Department of Public Health,

7,534 nonresidents received abortions in Illinois in 2019, compared with 2,970 in 2014 and 5,528 in 2017.

HB 370 is effective January 1, 2024.

