

Gov. Pritzker Speaks Out Against Overturning of Roe v. Wade, Affirms Reproductive Rights

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CHICAGO - Governor Pritzker today condemned the reported Supreme Court draft opinion to overturn Roe v. Wade, allowing states to enact even more restrictive anti-choice laws that would deny woman's access to reproductive health care. Early in his term, Governor Pritzker signed the Reproductive Health Act to protect Illinois women in anticipation of a conservative Supreme Court overturning Roe.

“The terrifying implications of this decision and what it means for millions of women across the country cannot be understated,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “But let me be clear- no matter what atrocity of an opinion the Supreme Court officially rolls out this summer in regards to Roe versus Wade – abortion will always be safe and legal here in Illinois. Illinois is and will remain a beacon of hope in an increasingly dark world. I will fight like hell – not just for the women who call Illinois home, but every person in every corner of this country who deserves to live a life of their own design.”

Governor Pritzker signed the Reproductive Health Care Act into law in 2019, establishing a fundamental right to reproductive healthcare, including abortion and maternity care, in Illinois state law. The law ensures regulations reflect current medical standards and requires private health insurance plans in Illinois to cover abortion like they do other pregnancy-related care.

Governor Pritzker also repealed the Parental Notification Act in 2021, which ensures that a pregnant minor can choose whether or not to involve a family member or legal guardian in their decision to have or not have an abortion. This repeal protected the most vulnerable youth - such as victims of rape, incest, and domestic abuse – from being compelled to notify their abusers.

Amid a wave of legislation and court action across the nation restricting a woman's right to choose in recent years, 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.

“We’ve been warned this day would come,” said House Speaker Emanuel “Chris” Welch. “That’s why we’ve worked hard in Illinois to ensure Roe v. Wade is codified into law and reproductive health care will never be in jeopardy. In Illinois, we will never go back.”

“The deeply misguided decision—made mostly by men—to overturn Roe v. Wade and strip legal protections for reproductive rights will have devastating consequences for women and families across the country,” said Majority Conference Chair LaToya Greenwood (D-East St. Louis). “It is immoral, partisan and erases decades of progress in the fight for equality in America. Illinois will always fight to protect the reproductive rights of all people. I stand with my colleagues in the House and Senate, Governor Pritzker and the millions of people who want to keep their bodily autonomy despite being attacked by this court.”

"Illinois must continue to do everything in its power to protect the reproductive health of women in this great state," said State Representative Will Davis (D-Homewood).

“While this draft opinion from the Supreme Court is not final, this attack on Roe v. Wade is appalling. Although we’ve expanded protections for reproductive healthcare here in Illinois, countless communities across the country will be disproportionately harmed by this decision,” said Representative Camille Lilly (D-Chicago). “Creating barriers to reproductive health services is going backward with women’s rights. Denying a person’s request for an abortion is essentially telling them they do not deserve the same rights as other patients. Black, Latino, and Indigenous communities, as well as people with disabilities, people in rural areas, young people, immigrants, and those most vulnerable in our communities will be the most affected by this opinion if it is made final. Here in Illinois, we will continue to protect women and all those who should have accessible and affordable healthcare.”

“Reports that the Supreme Court has voted to overturn Roe vs. Wade are devastating. Women will die if Roe vs. Wade is overturned – women who are forced to give birth knowing it will kill them, women who will seek abortions in back alleys, and more,” said State Representative Margaret Croke (D-Chicago). “In the state legislature, I’ve voted to ensure Illinois will remain the most pro-choice state in the country regardless of the Supreme Court’s decision, but millions of women live in states where legislators have already put laws in place to rip away their right to choose the second the Court’s ruling is official. I am terrified that I will be bringing my baby girl into a world where she has fewer rights than her grandmother once had, but I’m committed to fighting like hell to protect this fundamental freedom.”

“This decision in its draft form, is not only dismantling women’s reproductive rights and overturning decades of settled law, but it challenges the fundamental right to privacy in the 14th amendment,” said State Representative Eva-Dina Delgado (D-Chicago). “I stand with the majority of Americans who want safe and legal abortion and will fight to keep it that way.”

“The battle over Roe vs. Wade is about controlling a woman’s body,” said State Representative La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago). “The instructions on airplanes are if you are with children and there’s an emergency, put your oxygen mask on first. As an adopted person, I trust women to do what’s best for their health and life. As a politician, I listen, and I’ve met with women of all faiths and beliefs, and I stand with women and the right to choose what’s best for them.”

“As long as there is a Democratic majority in the Illinois State Senate, women will have their rights protected,” said Senate President Don Harmon (D-Oak Park). “We will stand as a bulwark against any efforts to turn back the clock to darker days.”

“Although Illinois has taken proactive steps to protect women’s reproductive rights, millions of women could be in danger should Roe v. Wade be overturned, and this

regressive move would set our country back by more than five decades,” said State Senator Adriane Johnson (D-Buffalo Grove). “Reproductive care is essential for women’s health, especially in underserved areas. I will continue to fight against this injustice and support women through these intense times.”

“I stand firm today, as I have every day of my tenure as an Illinois State Senator, with women to protect their right to choose what's best for them and their bodies,” said State Senator Julie Morrison (D-Deerfield). “We must demand access to safe and legal reproductive care and protect this fundamental right.”

“No person should be able to dictate or take away a woman’s right to choose. The move by the country’s top court is devastating, disheartening and downright appalling,” said State Senator Melinda Bush (D-Grayslake). “History shows us that today’s move won’t ban abortion — it will ban safe abortion, putting women at greater health risks. While I am relieved women in Illinois are able to depend on the reproductive health care they need, I can honestly say I’m afraid of the infringement of rights taking place in our country.”

“It is terrifying that in 2022 a woman in this nation may be given less freedoms and choices over her body and places to receive care for it,” said Deputy Majority Leader Laura Murphy (D-Des Plaines). “We’ve worked too hard to move women forward to take a step back like this now. I will continue to fight until the right to choose is protected for all women.”

“In this day and age, it is unconscionable that women would be denied reproductive rights,” said State Senator Laura Fine (D-Glenview). “I will fight to ensure women do not go backwards and our fundamental rights are protected.”

“A person’s decision to what happens to their own body is a fundamental health care right — no one should be able to take that right away,” said State Senator Karina Villa (D-West Chicago). “I am disheartened by the infringement made on people’s bodies. We must stand firm in our commitment to protecting reproductive health.”

“The nation—the world—is watching us. What we do next will have ripple effects on the rights of women, people of color, and queer people,” said Assistant Majority Leader Jacqueline Y. Collins (D-Chicago). History is depending on us to balance the scale of justice for our fellow Americans. May we live up to Illinois’ legacy of morality, freedom, and liberty.”

“I am grateful to be standing in solidarity with Illinois leaders, including the Governor, with full knowledge that, although the post-*Roe v. Wade* world has not quite arrived, the assuredly successful fight against that world starts now,” said State Senator Cristina

Pacione-Zayas (D-Chicago). “No court, no man, and no force can hold back the freedom of our bodily autonomy and self-determination. They may attempt to delay, but they cannot hold us back.”

“This is a sad time in our nation's history,” said State Senator Diane Pappas (D- Itasca). “Overturning Roe v. Wade will only hurt women by forcing them to resort to unsafe procedures. Although I am proud that Illinois took important steps to protect these rights, it is devastating to know some women may now struggle by not having the same level of care in their state.”