



July 2022

KEY MESSAGES:

H.R. 8296, THE WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT OF 2022

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & COMMERCE

On June 24, 2022, the Republican-controlled Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to abortion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. This decision reverses nearly 50 years of precedent established in *Roe v. Wade* and emboldens Republican politicians and hostile state legislatures to ban abortion and severely restrict access to care throughout the country.

- The Republican-controlled Supreme Court has achieved the Republicans' long-time and extreme goal of ripping away a woman's right to make her own decisions. Women have relied upon the right to abortion for generations, but that right is no longer guaranteed.
- In the immediate aftermath of the *Dobbs* decision, [at least nine states have abortion bans in effect](#), and half of all states are expected to ban or severely limit abortion in the days and weeks to come.
- Congressional Republicans, [along with former Vice President Mike Pence](#), are calling for a national abortion ban that would criminalize abortion "in every state in the land."
- As a result of *Dobbs*, whether a person can access abortion depends on the state in which they live and whether they have the financial and logistical support to travel for care if necessary while abortion remains lawful in other states.

The Supreme Court's extreme and dangerous decision turns back the clock and jeopardizes the health, well-being, and autonomy of women across the nation.

- We are already seeing the devastating effects of this decision.
 - Women are being forced to either continue their pregnancies against their wishes or [travel long distances to obtain abortion care in states where it remains lawful](#).
 - Health care providers are practicing [in fear of criminal consequences](#) for providing life-saving health care services and women's lives are subsequently [being put at risk as care is delayed](#) or denied.
 - And anti-abortion politicians are working to enact [ever more extreme and dangerous state laws](#) intended to control and punish those who seek care and those who help them.
- Comprehensive research has found that women [denied abortion face worse financial, health, and family outcomes](#), including an increased likelihood that a woman will stay in contact with a violent partner, and greater risk of serious health problems and [heightened risk of maternal death](#).
- The effects of bans on abortion are not felt evenly and those most impacted often already face discriminatory barriers to comprehensive health care, including women of color, low-income women, young women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.
 - Abortion bans will likely exacerbate the crisis in maternal mortality, especially amongst Black women, who are already three times more likely to die in childbirth.
 - A University of Colorado study in 2021 found that a [total ban on the procedure could increase pregnancy-related deaths up to 21 percent overall and up to 33 percent for Black women](#).

Access to comprehensive health care must include access to abortion – and the ability to access care should not depend on where you live. The Women’s Health Protection Act restores the right to an abortion nationwide ensuring all Americans – regardless of where they live – can make their own decisions about their lives and their futures.

- H.R. 8296 is landmark legislation that ensures health care providers have a statutory right to provide abortion care and patients have a statutory right to receive that care, free from state bans and restrictions that are only intended to impede or block access.
- The bill would restore abortion access nationwide and make it clear that all people have a right to an abortion without ideological, stigmatizing, and unnecessary restrictions that block care and undermine a woman’s ability to make her own health care decisions.
- The Supreme Court held in *Dobbs* that “the authority to regulate abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives.” On behalf of the people, the Women’s Health Protection Act protects the right to abortion and provides the comprehensive solution to ensure all Americans are entitled to make their own health care decisions and no one is denied the right to reproductive autonomy.

While Republicans seek to punish and control women by criminalizing abortion nationwide, House Democrats continue our fight to restore the right to an abortion as the law of the land with the Women’s Health Protection Act.

- In a historic vote, the House first passed the Women’s Health Protection Act in September 2021.
- This week, the House will once again vote to establish a federal statutory right to abortion by reaffirming our support for the right to abortion and access to comprehensive health care.
- The legislation has been updated to address the Supreme Court’s decision in *Dobbs* but retains the same statutory mechanism passed in September 2021 that provides the comprehensive and effective solution to ensuring the right to abortion nationwide.