



A message regarding Roe v. Wade from

YWCA's in New England

On Friday, June 24, 2022, people across the United States lost the right to make decisions about their future that deeply impact their lives and wellness when the Supreme Court voted to overturn Roe v. Wade. This 1973 ruling guaranteed federal constitutional protections for abortion rights. Today's news follow a draft decision document that signaled this outcome which leaked earlier this year on May 2nd.

The Supreme Court ruled that people have a right to an abortion nearly 50 years ago. Since that ruling, abortion rights activists have been hard at work to ensure continued, and improved, access to abortion and reproductive healthcare for all people across the United States. The ability to choose when, and if, to have a child is a profound choice with lasting

consequences that every person should be able to make for themselves. There is no question that this is a cause we should all rally behind.

In addition to its impact on the individual, abortion access also has far-reaching socio-economic consequences. And because of its **intersection** with gender, race, class, and many other **social identities**, supporting abortion access is critical to YWCA's mission of eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. It is unacceptable for a country that claims to value personal freedoms and individual autonomy to deny millions of Americans the right to make choices about their future, wellness, and livelihood.

Why losing legal access to abortion is a national crisis

Abortion access is essential to social justice, gender, and racial equity. Studies show that abortion access impacts financial security, earning potential, labor force participation, career opportunities, and educational attainment of those seeking abortions.

As the Boston Globe **recently summarized**, overturning Roe v. Wade would set back years of economic and social progress for women and would negatively impact the economy as a whole. "Existing state abortion restrictions already cost the economy an estimated \$105 billion a year by, among other things, reducing the number of women who are working, according to a study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a nonprofit advocacy group."

Legal access to abortion **increases women's probability of graduating college by 72%**. The effect was even larger for Black women, whose chances of completing college increased two- or three-fold. Delaying motherhood by one year due to access to legal abortion **increases women's wages by 11%**. Abortion legalization also **reduced Black maternal mortality by 30 to 40%** by increasing access to safe and affordable procedures. And this matter does not only pertain to the hardships that can arise from unwanted pregnancy. Legal abortion access also **decreases** the percentage of children who grow up in poverty. This statistic is especially important considering that many states with restrictive abortion regulations claim they seek to restrict abortions to protect the "sanctity of life" — while also exhibiting inadequate social services and higher childhood poverty rates. ([A Public Health](#)

Paradox: States with Strictest Abortion Laws Have Weakest Maternal and Child Health Outcomes.)

Although the importance of safe abortion access has been thoroughly documented, legal access to abortion in the United States is currently at great risk, and in turn, so is the well-being of millions of people across the country now that Roe v. Wade has been overturned.

Now that the Supreme Court ruled in the case concerning Mississippi's 15-week ban, effectively overturning Roe vs. Wade, other states across the United States are poised to follow with abortion restrictions. As many as **26 states** could ban abortion outright.

What does this mean for people in Connecticut?

Although Roe v. Wade has been overturned, Connecticut still allows abortions. On Friday, Governor Lamont **released a statement** on the Supreme Court's ruling and assured:

"I am grateful to live in Connecticut, where our laws make it clear that women have a right to choose. As long as I am governor, reproductive rights will be protected in Connecticut and I will do everything in my power to block laws from being passed that restrict those rights."

In May, Governor Lamont signed Public Act 22-19, a first-in-the-nation law that protects medical providers and patients seeking abortion care in Connecticut who may be traveling from other states that have outlawed abortion. Additionally, the law expands abortion access in Connecticut by expanding the type of practitioners eligible to perform certain abortion-related care.

What can we do to support legal abortion access?

Even under Roe v. Wade, abortion access remained inconsistent and inequitable as a result of varying state restrictions and other socio-economic barriers to abortion. In fact, over the past 50 years, **almost all of the more than 1,300 restrictions on abortion have been enacted by states, not the federal government**. Those seeking legal abortions faced a number of undue burdens such as age restrictions, waiting periods, lack of nearby

providers, ongoing stigma, harassment at clinics, and more. As YWCA USA has poignantly summarized:

“Every person experiencing pregnancy deserves to be protected, to receive accurate, unbiased medical information so they can make the best medical decisions for themselves, and to make decisions about whether to continue a pregnancy or to access abortion care. Punitive abortion bans disproportionately affect women of color, LGBTQ persons, young women, immigrants, low-income people, and others who have difficulty accessing reproductive health services.”

Five things you can do right now:

1. Learn and Share

Abortion access is a complicated legislative issue, but the purpose behind the ban on abortion is not – it’s about control and a lack human rights.

- **Learn** the history of this issue.
- **Listen** to the stories of women and those who have experienced challenges to their health care access.
- **Read** about the statistics, the facts, and the data that logically support access to abortions and how it would better our economy and society. This is an issue that especially **affects women of color**, If you are not of color, consider what it means to educate yourself and support your peers and friends of color during this time, including voting for their rights and not just your own. If you are a woman of color, know that you are not alone.
- **Speak up!** Talk to your friends about what is going on. Share articles, resources, and support to one another as women continue to be threatened.

2. Donate

Many amazing organizations have dedicated their mission to advancing equity in health. Be sure to do your research, there are many funds you can work with such as a local **Planned Parenthood** or **NARAL Pro-Choice**. Or, if you’d like to pay for women in other states that

have to travel for health equity **this is a link** to the National Network of Abortion Funds or **the Brigid Alliance** which helps connect women to states where they can achieve health equity.

Other organizations to donate to:

[Planned Parenthood National](#)

[Jane's Due Process \(for teens\)](#)

[Center for Reproductive Rights](#)

[Reproductive Equity Now](#)

3. Know and Support

If you yourself are in need of an abortion but don't know how or where to do so. [Research your local women's health clinic](#) and read about the laws in your city and state. Reach out to organizations that support women's rights and health equity like those listed. **The Brigid Alliance** helps women find access to care. Consider enrolling in counseling, read journals and stories to prepare yourself. Know that you are not alone.

You can also check out **YWCA New Britain Sexual Assault Crisis services** to speak to one of our counselors or find a support group.

If you or anyone you know needs assistance self-managing a miscarriage or abortion, please call the **Miscarriage + Abortion Hotline** at (833) 246-2632 for confidential medical support or the **Repro Legal Helpline** at (844) 868-2812 for confidential legal information and advice ([source: ARD](#)).

Other places of help:

- [Abortionfinder.org](https://abortionfinder.org)
- [Ineedana.com](https://ineedana.com)
- [Abortionfunds.org/need-abortion](https://abortionfunds.org/need-abortion)
- [Reprolegalhelpline.org](https://reprolegalhelpline.org) or call 844-868-2812
- [Plancpills.org](https://plancpills.org)
- **Call or text** 833-246-2632
- [Prochoice.org](https://prochoice.org)
- [Counseling](#) and [Emotional Support](#)
- [Help Getting There](#)

4. Sign up and Show up

Sign up for newsletters, alerts, and action coalitions that work to advocate for health equity. **YWCA USA** is a great place to start as well as the [Women's March network](#).

Attend rallies and join spaces where you can speak about this opening and support one another such as the **Bans off Our Bodies March** and **Action Network**.

5. Vote and Advocate

Local democracy is important and influential. **Are you registered to vote?** If not, sign up now! And get out that vote, **#GOTV!**

Even if you are not registered, you can still lobby your government. Pressure your local government to take legislative action to protect the right to abortion in your area: write to them, call their office, and ask how they are prioritizing women's rights in the wake of the overturning of Roe v Wade.

Visit [YWCA USA](#) to enter your name to reach out to your federal congress people about this issue.

Sample language: "Hi, my name is {NAME} from {CITY, STATE}. I care about women's health equity. With the recent overturning of Roe v Wade at the Supreme Court I want to be sure my representatives like yourself are advocating for the rights of women and people of color."

In solidarity,

YW Boston

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YWCA Central Massachusetts

YWCA Central Maine

YWCA Greater Newburyport

YWCA Greenwich

YWCA Hartford Region

YWCA Lowell

YWCA Malden

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