

Press release

U.S Supreme court overturns Roe v. Wade in biggest blow to women's health and rights in recent history

Washington DC/London, Friday 24th June 2022

The U.S Supreme Court has overturned Roe v. Wade in the biggest blow to women's health and rights in recent U.S history, removing 50 years of constitutional protection for abortion across America, meaning individual states will now decide the legality of abortion within their jurisdiction.

[Twenty-six states](#), including Mississippi, Oklahoma, Texas and Georgia, are now poised to enact "trigger laws" that will severely limit or ban abortion, putting approximately [40 million](#) women and girls of reproductive age at risk of losing abortion access, with lower-income people and people of color most severely affected.

The patchwork of state abortion bans means those without funds to travel for safe and legal abortion services or access medical abortion pills will be forced underground to unsafe and unregulated methods, with no guarantee of quality of care or aftercare if things go wrong.

The devastating rollback of reproductive rights resulted from the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization case, a 2018 ruling that banned abortion in Mississippi after 15 weeks of pregnancy. Of the nine federal Supreme Court Justices, 6 voted to uphold the Mississippi law, effectively overturning Roe v. Wade and 3 dissented.

Dr Alvaro Bermejo, Director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, said:

"The Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade is the biggest blow to women's health and rights in recent U.S history and an outrageous and devastating conclusion to what was already an unconstitutional removal of life-saving healthcare.

"By continuing its unbridled attack on women's bodies and forcing them to carry pregnancies to term, the highest court in the land has reached its lowest point, robbing millions of their liberty, bodily autonomy and freedom - the very values the United States prides itself on.

"We know for a fact that banning abortion does not mean fewer abortions and that when abortion bans are enacted, women and pregnant people die, as we have seen across the globe, most recently in Poland. We also know that those who cannot access safe abortion care legally, including medical abortion pills, will be forced into unregulated and unsafe methods, potentially resulting in serious harm or even death and costing lives for decades to come.

"The fallout from this calculated decision will also reverberate worldwide, emboldening other anti-abortion, anti-woman and anti-gender movements and impacting other reproductive freedoms. The justices who put their personal beliefs ahead of American will, precedent and law will soon have blood on their hands, and we are devastated for the millions of people who will suffer from this cruel judgment."

The overturning of Roe v. Wade also flies in the face of democracy and against the values of those the Supreme Court is meant to represent and protect, with the [majority \(60%\) of](#)

[Americans](#) supporting Roe v. Wade and [70%](#) believing the decision to end a pregnancy is between a woman or pregnant person and their doctor.

Elizabeth Schlachter, Director of Advocacy and U.S representative for the International Planned Parenthood Federation, said:

"The Supreme Court's perilous ruling is not just regressive but also wildly out of step with most Americans, who we know support access to abortion care. It is also at odds with much of the world, where access to abortion is expanding to reach all who need this vital health service.

"By overriding the constitutional right to abortion across the U.S and handing the decision to each state, many parts of the U.S will now join El Salvador, Nicaragua and Poland with some of the most restrictive, extremist and life-threatening bans on abortion care in the world.

"But this is not just about the anti-abortion movement in the U.S; this is concerted and calculated global effort by anti-women, anti-gender, anti-LGBTQI+, conservative and religious, white supremacist extremists, who are using dark money and undemocratic means to deny people their human right to healthcare, equality, bodily autonomy and ultimately, freedom.

"With long-held rights under sustained attack, the International Planned Parenthood Federation is imploring Governments across the globe to do more to protect democracy and peoples' freedoms from the interference and influence of these extremist groups."

The International Planned Parenthood Federation's (IPPF) Member Association, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), [continues to provide services](#) to all who need them where legally possible, including via telemedicine for [medical abortion pills](#).

IPPF and PPFA will also continue to work around the clock to protect the rights of all people both in the U.S and globally, fighting extremism at its core and ensuring that women and pregnant people will not be forced to carry a pregnancy or give birth against their will.

To help keep abortion legal, safe, and accessible, you can donate to the [International Planned Parenthood Federation](#) or [Planned Parenthood Federation of America](#).

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For media enquiries, please contact Karmen Ivey on kivey@ippf.org or media@ippf.org

About the International Planned Parenthood Federation

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) is a global service provider and advocate of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

For over 65 years, IPPF, through its 118 Member Associations and 15 partners, has delivered high-quality sexual and reproductive healthcare and helped advance sexual rights, especially for people with intersectional and diverse needs that are currently unmet. Our Member Associations and partners are independent organizations that are locally owned, which means the support and care they provide is informed by local expertise and context.

We advocate for a world where people are provided with the information they need to make informed decisions about their sexual health and bodies. We stand up and fight for sexual and reproductive rights against those who seek to deny people their human right to bodily autonomy and freedom. We deliver care rooted in rights, respect, and dignity - no matter what.