We Won’t Go Back: An Open Letter from State and Local Legislators Urging the U.S. Supreme Court to Defend Abortion Access

We all deserve the right to make decisions about our families and our bodies, free from coercion or violence. As elected officials in states and localities, we are committed to protecting and advancing these rights.

In the past decade, hundreds of restrictions on abortion care have been passed at the state level, and more local governments are restricting abortion in their own towns and counties. The resulting patchwork of laws means that a person’s ability to access their right to abortion depends on your zip code and the contents of your bank account, with low-income people, people of color, young people, immigrant communities, and rural communities paying the steepest price. As public servants, it’s our job to not only support policies that allow our constituents to survive but policies that allow them thrive.

The United States Supreme Court’s forthcoming decision in June Medical Services v. Russo, which concerns medically unnecessary regulations on abortion providers, is an opportunity for the Court to uphold precedent and ensure Louisiana does not devastate peoples’ ability to get safe, legal abortion care in their communities. Anything less—allowing the Fifth Circuit and Louisiana to disregard the Court’s precedent—would open the door for states to regulate abortion out of existence for millions of families. Abortion isn’t a right if you can’t access it.

The avalanche of recent state abortion restrictions, passed despite the highest levels of public support for abortion rights in decades, distorts our democracy. Our states and localities are resisting these attacks on our rights in favor of reflecting the will of the people: to have the freedom to live safe and healthy lives and to define their own paths.

As legislators representing millions of people in the places they live, work, go to school, raise families, and seek healthcare, we urge the Supreme Court to stand by decades of precedent, from Roe v. Wade to Casey v. Planned Parenthood to Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt, and reject this deceptive Louisiana law, and send a clear message that we won’t go back.
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