

June 16, 2021

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chair
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
Chair
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on The Constitution
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Subcommittee on The Constitution
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**101 Faith-Based, Religious, & Civil Rights Organizations
Express Support for the Women’s Health Protection Act**

Dear Senators Durbin, Grassley, Blumenthal, Cruz, and Committee Members:

As faith-based, religious, and civil rights organizations that share a commitment to religious freedom and the separation of religion and government, we write to express our strong and unequivocal support for S 1975, the Women’s Health Protection Act.

We affirm our nation’s founding principle of religious liberty, which is integrally bound to reproductive freedom. Religious liberty includes the right to follow one’s own faith or moral code in making critical, personal reproductive health decisions, without political interference. While we respect the right of every individual, including our lawmakers, to hold their own personal and religious beliefs, our country’s Constitution demands that no one impose a single religious viewpoint on all through civil law or regulation. The Women’s Health Protection Act is essential legislation that embodies these shared ideals.

The Women’s Health Protection Act is urgently needed. The nearly 500 abortion bans and restrictions enacted since 2011 have severely reduced or eliminated abortion access in large swaths of the country and fall hardest on those who already face barriers to accessing health care — including women; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); those working to make ends meet; members of the LGBTQI+ community; immigrants; young people; those living in rural communities; and people with disabilities. The Women’s Health Protection Act is an important bill that would enact protections on the federal level to safeguard access to high-quality care and to secure constitutional rights by protecting patients and providers from political or religious interference.

Rather than face onerous barriers due to their economic status, employment status, or zip code, this bill would ensure that each person can make a decision about abortion led by their own circumstances, faith, or beliefs. It would also protect the religious liberty of individual health care

providers seeking to administer quality care to their patients and enable providers to deliver abortion services free from burdensome restrictions designed to impede access rather than improve patient health.

We believe in compassion, justice, and dignity for all, compelling us to speak out for social justice and the right of every person to access comprehensive, affordable, and equitable reproductive health care. A compassionate nation ensures equal access to quality, timely health abortion care for everyone, an essential factor to social and economic participation, reproductive and moral autonomy, and the right to determine our own lives. In contrast, laws that limit the availability of abortion disrespect human dignity, erode constitutional rights, exact far-reaching health and economic consequences, and ignore the moral agency of physicians seeking to provide compassionate care.

Furthermore, laws that eliminate options for some based on their geographic location are profoundly unjust, pushing care out of reach for the most marginalized among us. We cannot remain idle as state laws transform our country into a map of “haves and have-nots” with regard to access to reproductive health services. We call on Congress to pass Women’s Health Protection Act to protect access to abortion and to help us build a society where all can participate equally and thrive in our communities with dignity.

Every day, we support equal, fair, and comprehensive access to health care and respect for personal decision-making. **We support the Women’s Health Protection Act as a means to this end and urge you and your colleagues to do the same.** The 117th Congress must act in solidarity with people and communities fighting for racial, economic, and reproductive justice and commit to protecting the right of every person to make their own decisions about their bodies, free from discrimination and political interference. It is the right thing to do.

Please contact Shannon Russell, Legislative Counsel at the National Council of Jewish Women, with any questions or for additional information.

Respectfully,

National Council of Jewish Women
Catholics for Choice
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Union for Reform Judaism
Women of Reform Judaism

National Organizations

A Critical Mass: Women Celebrating Eucharist
African American Ministers In Action (AAMIA)
ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal
Ameinu
American Atheists
American Humanist Association
American Jewish World Service

Anti-Defamation League
Avodah
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers
Central Conference of American Rabbis
Chicago Women-Church
Clergy Advocacy Board of Planned Parenthood Federation of America
CORPUS
Disciples Justice Action Network
Episcopal Women's Caucus
Freedom From Religion Foundation
Global Justice Institute (MCC)
Habonim Dror North America
Human Rights Campaign
Interfaith Voices for Reproductive Justice
Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
Jewish Council for Public Affairs (JCPA)
Jewish Women International
Jews United for Justice
Keshet
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC)
Moving Traditions
Muslim Advocates
Muslims for Progressive Values
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition of American Nuns (NCAN)
National Organization for Women
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
People For the American Way
Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options
Rabbinical Assembly
Reconstructing Judaism
Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association
Religious Institute
Society for Humanistic Judaism
Tivnu: Building Justice
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
Voices for Progress
We Testify
Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)
Women's League for Conservative Judaism
Women's Ordination Conference

State & Local Organizations

Florida Interfaith Coalition for Reproductive Health and Justice
Jewish Community Action
Just Texas: Faith Voices for Reproductive Freedom
Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH)
Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network (MUUSJN)
National Council of Jewish Women, Arizona Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Atlanta Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Austin Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Chicago North Shore Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Colorado Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Dallas Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Long Beach & West Orange County Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater New Orleans Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Houston Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Jersey Hills Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Kansas City Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Maine Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Milwaukee Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Minnesota Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Nashville Section
National Council of Jewish Women, New York Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Northern Virginia
National Council of Jewish Women, Palm Beach Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Peninsula Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Pittsburgh Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Sacramento Section
National Council of Jewish Women, San Antonio Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Sarasota-Manatee Section
National Council of Jewish Women, Southeast Atlantic Section
National Council of Jewish Women, South Cook Section
National Council of Jewish Women, St. Louis Section
Nebraska Religious Council for Reproductive Freedom
New Mexico Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Ohio Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
PA Religious Coalition for Reproductive Justice
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Connecticut, Inc.
Rhode Island Religious Coalition for Reproductive Freedom
SisterReach
South Carolina Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Texas Freedom Network
United Church of Christ Detroit Area Social Justice Team