

LWVIN WOMEN'S HEALTH UPDATE May 1, 2022

On Tuesday, March 8, 2022, Indiana's 122nd General Assembly Session convened with a caveat: a letter signed by 100 Indiana lawmakers to Gov. Eric Holcomb urged him to **"to call the General Assembly back in for a special session, at the earliest date applicable, should the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling expand Indiana's ability to enact laws that protect the sanctity of life."**

The landmark DOBBS V. JACKSON WOMEN'S HEALTH ORGANIZATION case was heard before the US Supreme Court on December 1, with a decision expected in June 2022. It is a legal challenge to Mississippi's 2018 Gestational Age Act, which **had banned abortions after 15 weeks** with sole exceptions for medical emergencies or fetal abnormality. **Federal courts had enjoined the state from enforcing the law, saying it violated the 24-week point of viability established by Roe v. Wade.**

The general consensus is that the Supreme Court will use the case to overturn all or part of Roe v. Wade. It is possible that abortion law-making will be returned entirely to the states.

We began 2022 by sending the Indiana Governor and all the state legislators an email message entitled "League of Women Voters of Indiana's Support of Reproductive Justice and Opposition to Texas SB8 Style Legislation in Indiana." This letter -- opposing a vigilante-type bill banning abortion after 6 weeks -- was co-signed by our Indiana League co-presidents, as well as 15 local Indiana Leagues and 19 individual League members.

Three bills we supported in 2022 became law:

- **Medicaid** recipients will now have an **entire year of health coverage** post-partum instead of the previous 60 days coverage. ([HEA 1140](#))
- Indiana followed the advice of prominent medical organizations and **outlawed the shackling of incarcerated people during childbirth** by passing [HEA 1294](#).
- **The definition of rape** now includes when a perpetrator disregards the survivor's attempts to "physically, verbally, or by other visible conduct refuse the person's act," a step towards acknowledging consent as a critical part of any sexual interaction thanks to [HEA 1079](#).

Many states have been scrambling to enact laws to restrict or expand abortion access ahead of the court's decision. New **laws restricting abortion** range from six-week bans to 15-week bans to bans on the abortion pill. Other states are **expanding abortion** access range.

Here are the states that have passed very restrictive abortion laws so far in 2022:

Arizona

The Governor signed a 15-week abortion ban that has no exemptions.

Florida

The state now bans abortions after 15 weeks, with an exception only for medical emergencies.

Idaho

Abortions are now banned after six weeks, with exceptions for rape and incest. Idaho's bill also allows family members of a person who got an abortion illegally to sue the abortion provider. **On April 8 the Idaho Supreme Court temporarily blocked this law.**

Kentucky

Abortion is now illegal after 15 weeks, and abortion pills by mail are banned. Abortions within the 15-week time frame are also heavily restricted – requiring birth and death certificates (with burial or

cremation) after an abortion is performed. **A temporary restraining order was issued by a federal judge on April 21.**

Oklahoma

Abortion is now illegal in the state. The only exception is if an abortion could save the life of the woman.

Wyoming

The Governor signed a bill to implement a **total abortion ban** on the condition the Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade. The abortion ban has exceptions for rape, incest and medical emergencies.

Here are the states that have recently passed laws expanding or codifying abortion access:

California

New laws abolish out-of-pocket costs for abortions, making it easier for women who can't afford the cost of an abortion to still obtain the procedure.

Colorado

By law, women now have the "fundamental right" to choose to have an abortion. The law also bans state or local entities from trying to restrict abortion access in the state.

Maryland

The Maryland legislature overrode their Governor's veto of a bill to expand abortion access. Other medical professionals besides physicians will be able to perform abortions and a state fund will be set up to train the medical professionals to perform abortions. The law will also require most insurance companies to completely cover the cost of an abortion.

New Jersey

The Governor signed a bill that creates a constitutional right to abortion in the state. This means if the Supreme Court does overturn Roe v. Wade, abortion access will still be available in New Jersey.

Vermont

Vermont is attempting to enshrine abortion access as a constitutional amendment after the House overwhelmingly voted in favor of the measure in February. Voters will get to decide in November if the Reproductive Liberty Amendment is adopted into the state's constitution.

Washington

A new law prevents individuals or the state from trying to sue abortion providers.

These other states have also introduced legislation to expand abortion access or have previous abortion protections: Connecticut, Illinois, Nevada, Oregon, New York, and Maine.

Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Hawaii, Alaska, Indiana & Kentucky **is already making plans to help Indiana women go to Illinois clinics for abortions.** There are 3 clinics in Illinois across from St. Louis, 4 in central Illinois, and 10 in the Chicago area. Most of these are PP clinics.

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