

## Restricting Abortion: Rhode Island<sup>1</sup>

In far too many places throughout this country, it has become extremely difficult for women to safely and legally end a pregnancy. In too many states, politicians have enacted laws that single out the provision of abortion services for restrictions that are more burdensome than those imposed on medically comparable procedures, do not significantly advance women's health or the safety of abortion services, and make abortion services more difficult to access. It's time for politicians to stop interfering with women's personal decision-making. We need a federal law that puts women's health, safety, and rights first. The Women's Health Protection Act does just that.

In Rhode Island, the following restrictions are among those that would be unlawful under the Women's Health Protection Act once enacted:

- ] **BAN** on abortions after viability without constitutionally adequate exceptions for the woman's life or health.<sup>2</sup>
- ] **REQUIREMENT** that clinics meet structural and other regulatory standards unrelated to patient safety.<sup>3</sup>

***“The requirement is medically unnecessary and would be an ‘intrusion’ into the doctor-patient relationship.”***

- Nitin Damle, President of the Rhode Island Medical Society, speaking about a proposed ultrasound requirement

### (Endnotes)

- <sup>1</sup> The restrictions highlighted herein are examples of the types of restrictions that the **Women's Health Protection Act** seeks to invalidate. This fact sheet is not intended as a comprehensive guide to abortion restrictions in Rhode Island.
- <sup>2</sup> R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-23-5.
- <sup>3</sup> 31-1 R.I. Code R. § 31-1-2:2.0. Prior to 14 weeks LMP the facility must have access to “hospital emergency back-up services” and between 15 and 18 weeks LMP abortion services may only be hospital, freestanding ambulatory surgical center, “office operator”, and/or in an outpatient setting meeting the criteria required for

a freestanding surgical facility. After 18 weeks of pregnancy, abortion services may only be provided in a hospital or a licensed freestanding ambulatory surgical center and may only be performed in the third trimester when the life or health of the woman is endangered.