

Restricting Abortion: Virginia¹

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

- **REQUIREMENT** that the woman undergo an ultrasound before obtaining an abortion—even when medically unnecessary—and that the provider offer the woman the opportunity to see the image, whether or not the provider believes it is appropriate.²
- **REQUIREMENT** that forces most patients to make two separate trips to a provider before they may obtain an abortion.³
- **REQUIREMENT** that providers who administer medication abortion procedures be licensed physicians,⁴ despite recommendations from the World Health Organization that other highly qualified health care providers can safely provide medication abortion.⁵
- **BAN** on abortions after viability without constitutionally adequate exceptions for the woman's life or health.⁶

(Endnotes)

- ¹ 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 Virginia.
- ² Va. Code Ann. §§ 18.2-76(B)-18.2-76(C).
- ³ Va. Code Ann. § 18.2-76(B).
- ⁴ Va. Code Ann. § 18.2-72 - § 18.2-74.
- ⁵ See World Health Org., *Safe Abortion: Technical and Policy Guidance for Health Systems* 65 (2nd ed. 2012), available at http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/70914/1/9789241548434_eng.pdf?ua=1.
- ⁶ Va. Code Ann. § 18.2-74(b).