

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Judy Chu
2423 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Marcia Fudge
2344 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lois Frankel
1037 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 13, 2017

Dear Senators Blumenthal and Baldwin and Representatives Chu, Fudge, and Frankel:

As members of the Act for Women campaign, we write to thank you for your leadership on the **Women's Health Protection Act**. This campaign unites national, state, and local organizations working to support and advance this critical legislation.

As this Congressional session begins, we want to make clear our strong commitment to the Women's Health Protection Act. It is no secret that anti-choice leaders and activists have increasingly sought new ways to undermine women's access to abortion care. Even with the landmark Supreme Court victory this past summer in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, many state legislators are still determined to erode, if not eradicate, the promise of *Roe v. Wade*. Since 2011, states have enacted 334 abortion restrictions, including laws that interfere with the practice of medicine by mandating unnecessary procedures and unconstitutional bans on abortion before viability.

On June 27, 2016, the United States Supreme Court struck down two such deceptive laws in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*: one that required abortion providers to have admitting privileges at a local hospital and one that required clinics providing abortion to convert to mini-hospitals. This momentous decision reaffirmed a woman's constitutional right to access safe, legal abortion and, as Justice Ginsberg wrote in her concurring opinion, warned that "Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers laws...that 'do little or nothing for health, but rather strew impediments to abortion,'... cannot survive judicial inspection."^[1]

The Supreme Court has confirmed loud and clear that undue burdens on women's access to abortion are unconstitutional. And while it is essential that the courts protect our rights, it is also the responsibility of Congress to enact policy that advances reproductive health and rights. Today many American women's constitutional rights still depend on their zipcode. Legislative attacks have diminished access to essential reproductive health care through a patchwork of laws that rolls back a woman's right to make the best health care decisions for herself and her family. We need a federal law that would make these restrictions unlawful, thus allowing medical providers to do the important work of providing safe, legal, high-quality health care to all women across the country, regardless of where they live.

We need the **Women’s Health Protection Act**, which would prohibit states from imposing restrictions like the clinic shutdown laws challenged in the Supreme Court case. But the bill also reaches beyond that—blocking many other types of laws that limit women’s access to safe and legal abortion services and shame women for their health care decisions, such as laws that mandate medical procedures not compatible with the standard of care, require abortion patients to make additional, medically unnecessary trips to the clinic, unjustifiably restrict access to medication abortion, or ban abortion before viability.

After years of relentless assaults on women’s health, safety, and constitutional rights, it’s time we had federal laws that put our health and rights first. We need the **Women’s Health Protection Act**. We commend you for your leadership on this critical legislation and pledge our support in working toward its passage.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

Abortion Care Network

Alliance for Justice

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Civil Liberties Union

American Medical Student Association

American Society for Emergency Contraception

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals

Black Women's Health Imperative

Catholics for Choice

Center for Reproductive Rights

Center on Reproductive Rights and Justice at UC Berkeley School of Law

Civil Liberties and Public Policy at Hampshire College

Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights

Ibis Reproductive Health

Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc.

Jewish Women International

Medical Students for Choice

NARAL Pro-Choice America

National Abortion Federation

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Council of Jewish Women

National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association

National Health Law Program

National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health

National Organization for Women

National Partnership for Women & Families

National Women’s Law Center

People For the American Way
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Institute
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
The Reproductive Health Access Project
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
Ultraviolet
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation

State and Local Organizations

Allentown Women's Center (Pennsylvania)
Atlanta Women's Center (Georgia)
Cherry Hill Women's Center (New Jersey)
Choices (Tennessee)
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (Colorado)
Delaware County Women's Center (Pennsylvania)
Feminist Women's Health Center (Georgia)
Hartford GYN Center (Connecticut)
Healthy and Free Tennessee (Tennessee)
NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado
Northland Family Planning Centers (Michigan)
Mabel Wadsworth Center (Maine)
Oklahoma Coalition for Reproductive Justice (Oklahoma)
Philadelphia Women's Center (Pennsylvania)
Preterm (Ohio)
Pro-Choice Resources (Minnesota)
Red River Women's Clinic (North Dakota)
SisterReach (Tennessee)
Southwestern Women's Surgery Center (Texas)
Southwest Women's Law Center (New Mexico)
The Hope Clinic for Women (Illinois)
Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health (Wisconsin)
Women's Medical Fund (Pennsylvania)

[1] *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, 136 S.Ct. 2292 (2016), as revised (June 27, 2016) (Ginsburg, J., concurring).