

Gov. Evers: Gov. Evers joins AG Kaul, lawmakers, advocates in push to defend reproductive healthcare access in Wisconsin

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today, together with Attorney General Josh Kaul, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin and other reproductive healthcare advocates, State Sen. Kelda Roys (D-Madison), Rep. Lisa Subeck (D-Madison), and other Democratic lawmakers, called on the Legislature to defend access to reproductive healthcare in Wisconsin by passing [Senate Bill \(SB\) 75](#). The push comes just days before the 49th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Roe v. Wade*—a ruling establishing a right to abortion in the U.S.—and as the court considers a case that could gut the decades old decision and curtail abortion access in Wisconsin and other states across the country.

The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in December regarding a Mississippi law prohibiting abortions at 15 weeks without exceptions for rape or incest, in direct conflict with the court's previous rulings in *Roe*, among other reproductive health related decisions. A decision from the court is expected in summer of 2022. Wisconsin is among several states across the country with existing criminal statutes that prohibit nearly all abortions—laws that preceded the *Roe* decision and were never removed from state statutes. In the event the Supreme Court overturns *Roe*, Wisconsin's criminal statutes could go back into effect unless the law is repealed before then.

"If *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, Wisconsin could turn back the clock 50 years on reproductive healthcare access," said Gov. Evers. "We cannot and should not go backwards. And frankly, folks have gotten too comfortable relying on the Court to

protect access to reproductive healthcare and allowing them to decide whether the people we care about in Wisconsin—our family members, friends, and neighbors—are able to access the care they need.

“Reproductive healthcare decisions are deeply personal and should be made by patients and their healthcare providers. Period. And no politician or special interest should interfere with those decisions. Instead, we should trust women to make decisions about their bodies and their healthcare, and we should be working to make sure that all Wisconsinites have access to quality, affordable healthcare, including reproductive healthcare. As long as I am governor, that’s what I’ll do.”

Attorney General Kaul has joined coalitions of attorneys general in opposing Mississippi’s effort to overturn *Roe*, supporting the Justice Department’s challenge to Texas’s ban on most abortions, and standing up against efforts to weaken the Title X program, which funds critical healthcare services.

“Reproductive freedom is in greater jeopardy than at any time since *Roe v. Wade* was decided nearly 50 years ago,” said Attorney General Josh Kaul. “With the real possibility that *Roe* could be overruled this year, now is the time to pass the Abortion Rights Preservation Act.”

Introduced at the start of this Legislative session in early 2021, SB 75 would repeal Wisconsin’s 172-year-old criminal abortion ban, which is currently unenforceable due to the *Roe* decision. Given the Supreme Court’s anticipated ruling this year, reproductive healthcare access in Wisconsin is under its most dire attack in nearly half a century.

“Six Supreme Court Justices have made anti-choice decisions or statements. From recent oral arguments, it appears that a majority of the Court is eager to overturn *Roe v. Wade*,” said Sen. Roys, co-author of SB 75. “We must repeal Wisconsin’s archaic 172-year-old abortion ban now to ensure that pregnant people in Wisconsin can access abortion care if *Roe* is overturned.”

“*Roe v. Wade* has been the law of the land for almost 50 years, protecting the freedom of every individual to make private reproductive healthcare decisions without interference from government,” said Rep. Subeck, co-author of SB 75. “If the Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*, abortion will be illegal in Wisconsin, and physicians who provide abortions could face felony charges. Abortion is health care, not criminal activity, and the Abortion Rights Preservation Act is needed to ensure it

remains safe, legal, and accessible, no matter what.”