

Mayor Rhodes-Conway: Statement on the Overturning of Roe vs. Wade

Posted on Friday, Jun 24, 2022

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Today, the U.S. Supreme Court took away the right to abortion for millions. In doing so, they are now allowing state governments to force people, including minors and victims of rape and incest, to give birth.

They have also fundamentally damaged and undermined the right to privacy upon which many other rights rest. Get ready—they will come for contraceptives; they will come for marriage equality. They are clearly ready to turn back the clock, and they do not care who is harmed in the process.

I'm angry. Angry that, despite most people in this country supporting abortion rights, a handful of people took those rights away from us. I'm frustrated—frustrated that our gerrymandered state legislature would uphold an antiquated 1849 statute rather than defend our state's freedoms. And I'm fearful—fearful for all the people who will experience hardship and suffering from this decision, and fearful for the ripple effects this decision will have on our society.

This decision is an attack on the rights of Americans. The right to choose when or if we have children. The right to have autonomy over our own bodies. This decision is not in

alignment with what most Americans believe—that pregnant people should have the right to make decisions about their own health. This decision does nothing to protect even the most vulnerable in society—children and minors, people who can't afford to travel out of state, people who are sexually assaulted—as well as anyone who simply finds themselves pregnant when they do not want to be. It is sickening to think about the harm and trauma this will cause in our country.

The Supreme Court has failed us and our state has failed us. But we are determined as a City to do all we can to counteract these failures. Last week, our Common Council passed a resolution that supports the Madison Police Department in refusing to arrest people for any violation of the 1849 statute on abortion in Wisconsin. We will not be arresting abortion providers in Madison. Our City stands opposed to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and opposed to the 1849 statute banning abortions in Wisconsin. Our freedoms are so fragile. Women have been able to vote for a single century; segregation was ended less than a lifetime ago; LGBTQ+ people won the right to marry less than a decade ago. More than ever, I am grateful to live in a city that values and cares about other people. And I am grateful to be a part of its leadership, to uphold our values of fairness, justice and equity.

I urge all of you to join me in advocating with your state and federal elected officials, voting to elect people who will protect our rights, and speaking up for justice. Together, we will show our state and our country what Madison stands for.