

Opportunity Wisconsin: Sen. Johnson votes to turn back the clock on Wisconsin women's rights

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Johnson's vote to block the Women's Health Protection Act denies Wisconsin women their constitutional right to access abortion care

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MADISON, Wis.—Today, Senator Ron Johnson voted to block the Women's Health Protection Act (WHPA) from moving forward in the U.S. Senate. The bill would have codified the right to abortion guaranteed currently under *Roe v. Wade* into law, protecting both the right and access to the vital medical procedure. Yesterday, Senator Johnson endorsed a total ban on abortion care in the Badger State. During a [radio appearance](#) (27:05), Senator Johnson noted that approximately 6,000 abortions are performed each year in Wisconsin and claimed that this was "6,000 too many."

Meghan Roh, Opportunity Wisconsin program director:

*"Today Senator Johnson abdicated his duty to represent all of Wisconsin when he voted to block the Women's Health Protection Act. Over sixty percent of Wisconsin residents say abortion should be legal in most or all cases, and yet, today Senator Johnson decided to deny our constitutional right to access abortion care. Senator Johnson has now left this issue up to a panel of un-elected judges who are poised to imminently overturn *Roe v. Wade* and send Wisconsin women back to 1849 where we would face a criminal abortion ban.*

“Today’s vote also has significant economic implications—something Senator Johnson purports to care about. Limits on our ability to make decisions about our own reproductive health isn’t just going to be ‘[a little messy for some people](#),’ it’s going to have a direct impact on our economic security. Too many across the Badger State are worried about paying their bills and putting food on the table, and instead of working to bring down costs, Senator Johnson is choosing to support policies that we know would have very damaging effects on Wisconsin families and the economy. It’s time for Senator Johnson to stop putting politics over our personal health care choices.”

While [testifying](#) before the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee yesterday, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen laid out just how damaging overturning *Roe v. Wade* would be, not only for women, but for the economy, saying the landmark court case “enabled many women to finish school, that [it] increased their earning potential. It allowed women to plan and balance their families and careers. And research also shows that it had a favorable impact on the well being and earnings of children.”

In fact, according to a recent piece published by [The Morning Brew](#):

- [Dr. Diana Greene Foster’s 2020 book] The Turnaway Study followed groups of women who wanted abortions for five years. Two-thirds of the group that was unable to get abortions were living in poverty within six months, compared to 45% of the group that was able to receive the procedure.
- In 1970, prior to *Roe v. Wade*, women’s labor force participation rate was about 43%. Scholars argue that abortion access was an important factor in raising that rate to 57.4% by 2019.
- A 2020 paper published by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that being denied abortion access causes bankruptcies and evictions experienced by women to rise by 81%, and increases the amount of debt women hold that is 30+ days past due by 78%.

Since early 2021, Opportunity Wisconsin has been working to hold Senator Johnson accountable to his constituents and to demand he vote for policies that support Wisconsin residents. In addition to holding conversations with Wisconsin workers and families across the Badger State, Opportunity Wisconsin has [spent over \\$5 million](#) in TV ads urging Senator Johnson to focus his work in Washington on addressing the economic needs of his constituents and to stop putting his personal profits over the people of Wisconsin.