

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin : Overtly anti-abortion Republican candidate Ron Johnson to debate pro-choice champion Lt. Governor Mandela Barnes in second Wisconsin Senate debate TONIGHT

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WISCONSIN – Tonight, at 6PM Republican candidate Ron Johnson will debate reproductive health champion Lt. Governor Mandela Barnes in the second U.S. Senate debate. The overturning of Roe v. Wade stripped away the Federal Constitutional Right to choose an abortion, which means that the people elected to state and federal offices will determine the future of abortion access in Wisconsin and nationally. There has never been a more critical time to elect reproductive health care champions.

Ron Johnson has a history with the anti-choice movement opposing abortion with no exceptions. Let's take a look at Ron Johnson's history:

- In 2011, Johnson was a co-sponsor of a personhood bill.
 - The bill declared, "The terms 'human person' and 'human being' include each and every member of the species homo sapiens at all stages of life, including, but not limited to, the moment of fertilization, cloning, and other moment at which an individual member of the human species comes into being." [[American Independent](#)]
- Ron Johnson said he believes life begins at conception:
 - "I believe it does. I mean, it's somewhat irrefutable. Again, the question

- is, at what point do we protect that life? I believe it should be protected immediately.” [[American Independent](#)]
- Johnson has co-sponsored a national ban on abortion at 20 weeks’ gestation introduced by South Carolina Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham six times, in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021. The bill has not passed so far. [[American Independent](#)]
 - Ron Johnson said in 2018 that he believes abortion rights should be left to individual states and that there should be “reasonable limits” on them:
 - “At some point in time, I think the rights enumerated in our Declaration of Independence — the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness — ought to cover a child in the womb. ... This has been a wound to our body politic for decades as a result.” [[American Independent](#)]
 - Johnson has joined other members of Congress in amicus briefs in support of lawsuits aimed at restricting abortion rights.
 - In 2020 in *June Medical Services, L.L.C. v. Gee*; and in 2021 in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* as the Supreme Court considered the constitutionality of Mississippi’s 15-week abortion ban. In *Dobbs*, Johnson joined other Republican senators in urging the court to uphold the ban, which held no exceptions for pregnancies resulting from rape or incest. The court decision in *Dobbs* in June reversed its 1973 decision in *Roe v. Wade* that had affirmed a constitutional right to abortion. [[American Independent](#)]
 - Ron Johnson sponsored the Life at Conception Act. [[Congress.gov](#)]
 - On Lindsay Grahams 15 week national abortion ban, Johnson stated:
 - “OK, so I’m not in favor of what Lindsey Graham just all of a sudden provided [inaudible]. It’s not the time, maybe at some point in time, maybe in the future, once this process is played out in all the states, maybe Congress needs to come in there and go, okay you’ve got a couple of outliers here, you better you know, better protect life a little bit sooner than that. But you know, the extreme position, by the way, is from the left.” [[Jezebel.com](#)]
 - On abortion, he stated:
 - “It might be a little messy for some people, but abortion is not going away,” he said, saying that driving across state lines to Illinois would likely be an option. “I just don’t think this is going to be the big political issue everybody thinks it is, because it’s not going to be that big a change.” [[MSNBC](#)]

Statement from Steven Webb, Executive Director, PPAWI

“ At tonight’s debate it is important that we keep in mind the history Ron Johnson has of opposing abortion in all cases, even rape, incest and the health of the mother. Many Wisconsinites are worried that rights we’ve had for generations are being taken away. We saw thousands and thousands of Wisconsinites become activists this summer as they took to the streets, called their family and friends, and demanded their rights back. With the future of reproductive rights on the line, it is more important than ever to elect candidates who will champion those rights and protect our health.”