

Planned Parenthood: Leaders Applaud AG Kaul's challenge to WI criminal abortion ban

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Wisconsin— Today, Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul announced his intent to challenge the enforceability of Wisconsin's 173 year old criminal ban on abortion that criminalizes abortion at all stages of pregnancy without exception for rape, incest or the health of the woman.

Planned Parenthood President and CEO Tanya Atkinson applauded this important effort to challenge this archaic law and to restore patient access to essential health care. Atkinson stated, "The harm from this 173 year old law is already being felt by the patients for whom PPWI provides care. Patients are being denied the care they want and need simply because our Supreme Court and state Legislature have refused to consider their health and wellbeing. Today, doctors are forced into the impossible position of waiting for their patients to get sick enough to provide needed medical care - forcing them to go against their oath to do no harm or face years in prison. Today we are turning people away who are already struggling with poverty, trauma, abuse, the devastation of an unexpected pregnancy complication, or simply the difficulties of traveling outside of the state for the first time to access essential health care. This is a new and frightening territory. This is not the future that people in Wisconsin deserve."

PPWI Medical Director, Dr. Kathy King thanked Attorney General Kaul saying, "As a physician committed to the health and safety of my patients, I know the fall of *Roe* will exacerbate the maternal health crisis in this country. When compared to similarly wealthy countries, the United States ranks last, with the highest maternal mortality rate. The patients who are being turned away from care at PPWI include victims of child sexual abuse, women with severe cardiac conditions that could

worsen and threaten their lives should they continue a desired pregnancy and people who for whatever reason are not in a place in their lives to carry a pregnancy to term or support another child.”

Dr. King continued, saying, “The person who is pregnant should be the one to make the deeply personal, moral, and ethical decision based on their life circumstances whether to continue or terminate their pregnancy – not an archaic law written at a time when women could not vote or hold elected office. The Attorney General’s actions today are on behalf of all of the patients I and my colleagues at PPWI serve.”