

Rep. Shankland: Statement on special session on reproductive rights

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MADISON- Today at noon, the Wisconsin Legislature was due to meet in a special session on the order of Governor Tony Evers to discuss legislation to repeal Wisconsin's 1849 criminal abortion ban. At the time of this release, the majority party has not convened the State Assembly, and they have indicated that they intend to gavel in and out of the special session without discussion on the legislation.

Wisconsin is one of several states with existing statutes that criminalize abortion. These archaic laws were enacted before the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision establishing a constitutional right to abortion, *Roe v Wade*. With the U.S. Supreme Court's decision on *Dobbs v. Jackson* looming and likely to overturn *Roe*, it is likely that Wisconsin's abortion ban could be set into effect once again.

Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point) issued the following statement regarding today's special session:

"The Wisconsin State Assembly should have met today. As elected officials, it is our duty to respond to and represent the will of the people. [A majority of Wisconsinites](#) support legal access to abortion, and the Legislature's failure to take a vote on repealing this law is a disservice to our constituents who deserve safe and accessible reproductive healthcare. Wisconsin's 1849 criminal abortion ban is not only outdated, it is harmful and dangerous.

“Everyone deserves to make this deeply private medical decision without political interference. Should *Roe v. Wade* no longer be in effect, our state’s criminal abortion ban will prevent individuals from exercising their liberties and making healthcare decisions. I am glad to coauthor legislation to repeal our state’s criminal abortion ban, and I appreciate Governor Evers’ call to action on [LRB-6340](#). It is a shame that the majority party remains unwilling to pass — or even debate — legislation to repeal Wisconsin’s 1849 criminal abortion ban. All voters deserve to know where their representatives stand on jailing medical providers.

“Although I am disappointed by the outcomes of the special session today, the fight for reproductive freedom is far from over. I will continue to stand with the majority of Wisconsinites in supporting safe and legal abortion access in Wisconsin, and I will not stop until everyone can make their own healthcare choices without politicians interfering. The people of Wisconsin deserve full access to their freedoms, and it is our duty as legislators to *protect* our rights, not outlaw them.”