

Committee to Protect Health Care: On Election Eve, Wisconsin doctors urge voters to support abortion rights, women's health in Tuesday Supreme Court election

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MADISON, Wis. – On Election Eve, Wisconsin physicians and a medical student called on voters to stand up for women's medical freedom and health by casting their ballots for **Judge Janet Protasiewicz** in the high-stakes state Supreme Court race on Tuesday, April 4.

The call from the physicians comes on the heels of [an ad](#) that ran in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* on March 28, where more than 300 Wisconsin medical professionals [signed a letter](#) of support for Protasiewicz, calling Tuesday's election "a critical opportunity to elect a justice who prioritizes reproductive freedom and health, thus flipping our Supreme Court to value women's health and medical freedom."

"Tomorrow, Wisconsin voters have an opportunity to stand up for our patients and for all Wisconsin women, so that they can make their own personal medical decisions without the meddling from politicians," said **Dr. Shefaali Sharma, a Madison OB/GYN and member of the Committee**. "As physicians, we are seeing firsthand how extremist politicians and judges in Wisconsin have endangered the health and even the lives of our patients by preventing them from access to the health care they need, even in cases of medical emergencies requiring an abortion. By voting for Judge Protasiewicz, Wisconsin families will have a champion on the State Supreme Court who will respect a woman's right to make private medical decisions that are right for her without outside political interference."

A supporter of abortion rights, Protasiewicz is seeking to win a vacant seat on the Wisconsin Supreme Court, flipping it from a 4-3 conservative majority to one that values women's health and medical freedom. The Supreme Court will likely be the final arbiter on Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul's lawsuit to eliminate the state's 1849 abortion ban.

"As physicians, we are deeply concerned that pregnant women are [delaying life-saving health care](#) because of Wisconsin's dangerous and reckless ban," **Dr. Kristin Lyerly, a Green Bay OB/GYN, member of the Committee's Reproductive Freedom Taskforce, and intervenor in AG Kaul's lawsuit against WI's 1849 abortion ban**, said. "Because of Wisconsin's ban, one Wisconsin woman was forced to carry [nonviable fetal tissue](#) for days, risking potentially fatal sepsis. [Another Wisconsin woman's water broke](#) at just 18 weeks, and though she was already showing signs of an infection, she had to wait for doctors to agree that her life was at sufficient risk to be able to terminate the pregnancy, which had no chance of survival. Tomorrow, voters can take an important step toward ending these outrageous threats to women's lives, by voting for Judge Janet Protasiewicz."

"Judge Janet Protasiewicz has been [clear and consistent](#) in her support for reproductive freedom, which the majority of Wisconsin voters also support," said **Dr. Leslie Abitz, a Sheboygan OB/GYN and Legislative Chair of the Wisconsin Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists**. "No woman in our state should put her life at risk or flee to other states for necessary health care that they can't get because of extremist politicians and judges like Dan Kelly. Last November, voters made it clear that they trust women to make their own health care decisions, and doctors are urging them to make their voices heard again on Tuesday."

"By the time I begin my career as a physician, I will have dedicated over a decade of my life to learning the art and science of medicine; It is an egregious act that anyone, let alone a politician, thinks it's their place to make medical decisions without even a remote grasp of this understanding," said **Emmy Lambert, a second year medical student at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, who represents her own views**. "Wisconsin will lose many bright, driven, and talented learners and physicians as a direct result of our restrictive and hostile reproductive healthcare laws. That is, unless we elect politicians and judges like Janet Protasiewicz and take steps towards overturning these restrictive laws."