

Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Org. (JWHO) and S.1 (S.C. Fetal Heartbeat Protection from Abortion Act) Talking Points

Official Statement: *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Org.*

Controlling a woman's sexual and reproductive life is often a component of abuse. Within intimate partner violence, this means using intimidation, threats, or physical violence to control a partner's reproductive choices.

Ensuring domestic and sexual violence survivors can live a safe and healthy life means ensuring all people have access to healthcare — including abortion care. **It is vital to their social and economic participation, reproductive autonomy, and the right to determine their own lives.**

The *Dobbs v. JWHO* opinion overturning *Roe v. Wade* is deeply harmful to survivors, and we urge you to reach out to your elected officials to ask them to trust people to make the decisions that are best for their lives and their bodies.

Official Statement: S.1 (SC Fetal Heartbeat Protection from Abortion Act)

While this law provides an exception for rape and incest, it requires that any abortion provided to a victim be reported to law enforcement, along with their name and contact information, **ensuring the absolute destruction of a victim's privacy and self-determination in the wake of a violent assault.**

Victims, and victims alone, should be able to decide whether to report a rape to law enforcement, with all the collateral consequences that this can involve in the way of additional trauma, disbelief, shaming, and brutal court cases.

Additionally, this law does not provide any protections for a woman who has become pregnant as a result of reproductive coercion, a form of abuse that includes forced sex, refusal by a male partner to use contraception, stealthing, or otherwise sabotaging contraception.

The exception as written does not provide anything close to an adequate response to survivors of rape and intimate partner violence.

Additional Talking Points: Access to Abortion Care and Impact on Victims/Survivors:

- **42.3% of S.C. women** experience intimate partner physical violence, intimate partner sexual violence, and/or intimate partner stalking in their lifetimes, and perpetrators maintain power within relationships by undermining their partners' economic security, health, safety, and autonomy to make reproductive and sexual health decisions.
- **Coercive control and reproductive coercion are used regularly in domestic violence situations.** Abusers use tactics such as sabotaging contraception, knowingly exposing the victim to an STI, forcing sexual contact, inflicting harm with the intent of causing

miscarriage, or forcing the victim to carry to term. Pregnant victims risk being trapped in violent relationships if they cannot access safe abortion care, which **can lead to heightened abuse during pregnancy or the abuser killing the victim.**

- The ability to make decisions about emergency contraception and pregnancy termination after domestic and/or sexual violence victimization is often a critical component of finding safety and healing for victims. These options are necessary for survivors to live independent lives free of abuse and from their abuser/perpetrator.
- Privacy is fundamental for survivors seeking safety; they rely on this protection to feel safe seeking help and accessing services. By overturning *Roe* and allowing S.1 to become law, **domestic and sexual assault survivors' constitutional right to privacy has been severely compromised**, putting them at risk of additional harm.
- Everyone will feel the consequences of these bans, but **the worst effects will be on people of color, people living in rural areas, young people, people living in poverty, survivors of domestic and sexual violence, people in our LGBTQ+ community,** and others who lack access to essential reproductive health care.
- **Even with access to abortion care, women in S.C. already die at a much higher rate due to pregnancy-related** causes compared to other states across the U.S according to a [SCDHEC 2021 Legislative Brief](#). Now, without access to the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare, including abortion care, even more women are likely to die in S.C.
- **Black women and women of color bear a disproportionate burden of the lack of access to reproductive healthcare options.** Black women are already dying at unprecedented rates in this country during pregnancy and childbirth — with S.C. having some of the highest maternal and infant mortality rates — and now they will be forced to carry unwanted pregnancies to term. [Learn more about pregnancy-related mortality in S.C.](#)
- SCOTUS has unleashed chaos. Every day, people seek abortion care, they get help from their families, friends, and trusted partners, and abortion clinic providers and funds provide critical compassionate support and care to them. **The Court has now put all of them in jeopardy.** This country is not ready for the devastation that's forthcoming.

Additional Talking Points

- This is the first time the **United States Supreme Court has taken away a fundamental constitutional right**—a right that people have relied on for nearly 50 years.
- This decision means **people have lost a basic right** — a right that has now been handed to whichever elected officials are in power in their state at a given time.
- **This Court is denying people their equality.** As the dissent says, "Respecting a woman as an autonomous being, and granting her full equality, meant giving her substantial choice over this most personal and most consequential of all life decisions."
- **This opinion lays out a roadmap for eviscerating other important rights and for politicians to restrict access to other critical health care.** Justice Thomas makes clear that he wants to overturn the right to contraception and marriage equality, among other longstanding fundamental rights.

Advocacy Messaging

- **The consequences of coercive control on reproductive and sexual health can be prevented if people are allowed to access safe and adequate care.** We oppose any actions that limit a person's right to access sexual and reproductive healthcare services.
- **We support actions and policies that prevent sexual and domestic violence and invest in the health and safety of all South Carolinians.** To us, advocating for broad access to safe abortion includes advocating for strengthening the systems that support individuals and families so that all can lead healthy and stable lives free from violence.
- The *Dobbs v. JWHO* ruling overturning *Roe v. Wade* is deeply harmful to survivors, and **we urge you to reach out to your elected officials to ask them to trust people to make the decisions that are best for their lives and their bodies.**

Contact Your Elected Officials:

- Reach out to your state and federal elected officials to let them know the importance of bodily and reproductive autonomy for everyone. We must ensure domestic and sexual violence survivors can live a safe and healthy life, which means ensuring all people have access to healthcare — including abortion care. **It is vital to their social and economic participation, reproductive autonomy, and the right to determine their own lives.**
- Privacy is also fundamental for survivors seeking safety; they rely on this protection to feel safe seeking help and accessing services. **By overturning *Roe* and allowing S.1 to become law in South Carolina, the constitutional right to privacy has been completely destroyed** — putting survivors at risk of additional harm.
- You can also [take action today to tell your legislators to support S.1348, the Reproductive Health Rights Act](#) — a bold commitment to improving the health and lives of South Carolinians. The bill would repeal existing restrictions on abortion care and affirm the rights to contraception, in vitro fertilization, sex education, and all other forms of reproductive health care. Full access to reproductive health care is essential for the health, education, economic security, and equality of all South Carolinians.

#StandWithSurvivors on social media

We encourage you to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) and like/share/amplify our messaging to support survivors of domestic and sexual violence and the necessity of equitable access to essential healthcare, including abortion care.

Hashtags: #StandWithSurvivors

Contact for questions or assistance: communications@sccadvasa.org.

Sources: [National Women's Law Center](#), [Women's Rights & Empowerment Network](#), [Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#), [National Network to End Domestic Violence](#)