

Legislative Update

Since the *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision in 2022 overturned *Roe*, reproductive rights have been under attack like never before. Even though 7 in 10 Americans support the right to legal abortion, states across the country have further restricted access after the *Dobbs* decision went into effect.

Individuals who can no longer obtain an abortion from a clinic in these states are now forced to travel to another state for abortion care (facing additional direct and indirect costs associated with travel logistics, childcare and time off work), self-manage their abortion or continue their pregnancy, putting their mental and physical health at risk. Dramatic increases in caseloads mean clinic capacity and staff are stretched thin, resulting in longer wait times for appointments even for residents of states where abortion remains legal. Denial of reproductive health care can also have disastrous consequences on one's economic security, causing them to fall into poverty. Currently, 58% of women aged 13-44 live in a state that is hostile or extremely hostile to abortion rights.

Abortion restrictions and bans disproportionately hurt those who already face discriminatory obstacles to health care, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants, young people, people with disabilities, and lower-income individuals. Of the states with the most restrictive abortion policies, many have higher populations of people of color.

However, voters have not taken the assault on access to abortion and reproductive healthcare lying down. California, Michigan, Vermont, Kentucky, Kansas, and Montana all fought back by voting to protect abortion rights in their constitutions. This past November, Ohio voted in favor of an amendment that would enshrine the right to abortion in their state constitution. WRJ and RAC-OH played [an instrumental part in the election](#), working as part of a major coalition ensuring that Ohioans showed up to vote for reproductive freedom. Reform Jewish congregations and individuals in Ohio and across the nation engaged in an historic mobilization effort that contacted over 436,000 voters by sending over 352,000 text messages,

connecting with over 8,000 voters through phone calls, and sending over 64,000 postcards to eligible Ohio voters.

Unfortunately, the attack on reproductive rights is far from over. This year the Supreme Court is hearing two cases that could have huge ramifications for the future of access to healthcare in the U.S. The first is *U.S. Food and Drug Administration v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine*, which will determine if Mifepristone (one of two medications commonly used in a self-managed abortion) can still be on the market. Mifepristone has a safety record of 99%, and self-managed abortions have been a lifeline for people in states with laws restricting clinic access. More recently, the Supreme Court has decided to hear *United States v. Idaho*, the first case about a state's total abortion ban to make it to the Supreme Court. The outcome of this case will determine whether emergency room doctors are entitled to refuse to perform an abortion in cases where it is medically necessary for the health of the patient.