

## Reproductive Rights - 1989

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### Issue

The right of every woman, without regard to age or socioeconomic condition, based on her own religious and moral convictions, to make her own choices about her reproductive life with the full support of the legislative and judicial sectors of federal and state government.

### Background

In 1965, 1977, and 1981 at its Biennial Assemblies, the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, on the basis of Jewish values and teachings and the United States Constitution, affirmed clearly and publicly its commitment to the right of every woman to reproductive freedom. These rights, upheld by the 1973 Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, have been eroded by means of funding restrictions. Most recently, the 1989 Supreme Court decision in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* has attacked the fabric of *Roe* and put it in jeopardy of being overruled, particularly in light of the three abortion cases to be argued before the Supreme Court during its current term. Other challenges are now working their way through the lower courts. Increasingly, restrictive proposals continue to be brought before Congress and state legislatures. The message of *Webster* is clear: states are free to pass legislation to regulate, restrict, or overturn reproductive rights. The task of the pro-choice community is equally clear: the preservation of *Roe* requires intervention in the legislative process so as to assure passage of laws that guarantee full reproductive rights.

### Resolution

The women of Reform Judaism of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, in consonance with our Jewish values and our dedication to the doctrines of freedom of religion, the separation of church and state, and the right of privacy call upon our United States affiliates to:

- 1) Affirm our unwavering commitment to the protection and preservation of the reproductive rights of women; pledge our presence and support wherever, whenever, and for however long our goal may require it at the federal, state and local levels of government; further, we affirm our commitment to work in coalition with compatible pro-choice groups, especially the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, for the attainment of our common goal.
- 2) Endorse the 1973 United States Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade* and deplore all attempts, legislative and judicial, to dismantle it.
- 3) Support non-restrictive federal and state funding of reproductive services, including abortion, and non-restrictive private insurer coverage.
- 4) Support minors' access to reproductive health services, including contraceptives and abortion, unrestricted by parental notification, parental permission, or court order requirements.
- 5) Support the use of public hospitals and clinics, however defined, for the performance of abortions, with unrestricted access and funding for women who need it; affirm the right of health professionals, those publicly employed and those in private practice, to provide reproductive services, counseling and advice, including information about family planning, contraception and abortion, and to perform abortions; oppose the criminalization of either the health professionals who perform or assist at abortions or the women who receive them and affirm the obligation of local governments to protect physically the clients, staff and premises of reproductive care facilities against the action of anti-choice persons and groups.

Further:

- 1) We applaud those decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada that have assured Canadian women of their reproductive freedom;
- 2) We urge NFTS worldwide constituents to work toward securing or retaining reproductive rights for all women.