



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION AFFIRMING FULL ABORTION RIGHTS AND REPRODUCTIVE EQUITY IN OPPOSITION TO THE SUPREME COURT OVERTURNING ROE V. WADE

- WHEREAS*, The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) established a precedent in the landmark case of *Roe v. Wade* (1973), later affirmed in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) and *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt* (2016), guaranteeing the constitutional right to legal pre-viability abortion in the US; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Since *Roe v. Wade* was decided in 1973, several states have worked to enact restrictions to accessing abortion, causing widespread clinic closure and significant barriers to accessing contraceptive and reproductive care; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Eliminating legal access to abortions does not reduce abortions, but has been empirically proven to dramatically increase the risk of death, bodily injury, and infertility, especially within low-income communities and communities of color; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Black women in the United States are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than White women, and forcing birth will further exacerbate such inequities in medical care; *and*
- WHEREAS*, The right to reproductive choice impacts the liberty, health, and financial security of transgender men and non-binary individuals; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Limiting access to safe abortion has been shown to increase incidents of domestic abuse, and laws criminalizing abortion can have profoundly negative impacts on individuals who suffer miscarriages; *and*
- WHEREAS*, The negative impacts of limiting access to safe abortion disproportionately affect low-income individuals, people of color, transgender and non-binary people, and survivors of child abuse, sexual assault or domestic violence; *and*
- WHEREAS*, The recent leak of an initial draft majority opinion of the SCOTUS written by Justice Samuel Alito in the case of *Thomas E. Dobbs, State Health Officer of the Mississippi Department of Health v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* foreshadowed the impending overturn of *Roe v. Wade*, allowing states to ban abortion at any point in pregnancy and the possibility of complete bans on abortion; *and*
- WHEREAS*, By its majority opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson* of Justice Samuel Alito joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett, the Supreme Court on June 24, 2022 revoked the constitutional right to an abortion, reversing 50 years of legal precedent; *and*

*WHEREAS*, The contents of the majority opinion, as well as the warning from the dissenting Supreme Court Justices, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, and Elena Kagan, make it clear that the threat to human rights in this country will not end at abortion rights; *and*

*WHEREAS*, Specifically, Clarence Thomas writes that for, “future cases, we should reconsider all of this Court’s substantive due process precedents, including *Griswold*, *Lawrence*, and *Obergefell*,” and thus calls into question the right of individuals to marry and love freely, as well as the right to contraception; *and*

*WHEREAS*, Sexual and reproductive rights, including safe and legal abortions, constitute a fundamental right, and the criminalization, delay and denial of access to safe and legal abortion care constitutes a form of violence against those who would seek contraceptive and reproductive care; *and*

*WHEREAS*, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has in recent years implemented additional measures to protect reproductive rights and to provide for continued access to reproductive health care services, even while other States have adopted laws limiting or prohibiting access to such services, which together may lead more individuals to seek reproductive health care services in Massachusetts; *and*

*WHEREAS*, On June 24, 2022, Governor Charlie Baker signed an executive order ensuring that Massachusetts providers who serve out of state residents can continue to provide reproductive health care services without concern that the laws of other states may be used to interfere with those services or sanction them for providing services that are lawful in the Commonwealth; *and*

*WHEREAS*, The City of Boston has a vested interest in protecting and promoting the health and the rights of all of its residents; *NOW, THEREFORE BE IT*

*RESOLVED*: That the Boston City Council affirms the right of all people to make medical decisions about their own bodies and to obtain access to the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare, including contraception and related services without obstacles; *AND BE IT FURTHER*

*RESOLVED*: That the Boston City Council affirms its commitment to obtaining reproductive justice – including equal access to affordable contraception, comprehensive sex education, freedom from sexual violence, and surveillance and accountability of systems to prevent reproductive human rights abuses – for all; *AND BE IT FURTHER*

*RESOLVED*: That the Boston City Council condemns the Supreme Court majority opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* and urges federal codification of full abortion rights and other affordable, safe, and accessible reproductive health care; *AND BE IT FURTHER*

*RESOLVED*: The Boston City Council calls on the federal government to further codify the rights upheld by *Griswold*, *Lawrence*, and *Obergefell*, and calls upon the Massachusetts Legislature to implement the recommendations of the Beyond Roe Coalition.

Filed on: June 29, 2022