

RESOLUTION #1323

DECLARATION OF THE BOROUGH OF STATE COLLEGE TO PROTECT ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

The State College Borough Council joins the United States Conference of Mayors in its call for action, per the following:

WHEREAS, reproductive health decisions ought to be made between a patient and their doctor without government interference; and

WHEREAS, abortion is healthcare that should remain legal, safe, and accessible for all women and nonbinary and transgender individuals who are able to become pregnant in all cities and states nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States established a constitutional right to abortion in the landmark decision of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 and reaffirmed that decision in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* in 1993; and

WHEREAS, in June 2022, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned the precedent of *Roe v. Wade* that provided the constitutional right to an abortion, and the subsequent decision of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* reaffirmed that right; and

WHEREAS, this decision repealed an individual's constitutional right to choose healthcare without the influence of state government, a right that is afforded by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution that provides a right to privacy and therefore protects a pregnant person's right to choose whether to have an abortion, undoing nearly half a century of progress in ensuring reproductive rights, access to safe healthcare, and individual freedom; and

WHEREAS, state governments are now emboldened to wade into the personal health and religious decisions of our constituents and challenge their ability to plan for or raise families on their own terms; and

WHEREAS, striking down the precedent will lead to stricter limits on abortion access across the nation with two dozen states that could immediately or quickly enact broad abortion bans or restrictions in the weeks or months ahead; and

WHEREAS, those bans and restrictions will impact up to 36 million individuals residing in those states with a disparate impact on our most vulnerable residents, particularly low-income Americans who are in need of these healthcare services; and

WHEREAS, thirteen states including Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi,

Missouri, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming have enacted trigger laws to automatically ban abortion in the first and second trimesters; and

WHEREAS, multiple states have decades-old abortion laws on the books that pre-date the Roe decision in 1973 that could be reinstated in its absence; and

WHEREAS, women and nonbinary and transgender individuals in the United States who are able to become pregnant will now lack the right to govern their own personal, private health decisions and their own bodies without interference from government; and

WHEREAS, many state bans or restrictions do not provide exemptions for cases involving rape or incest, further punishing individuals who have been victimized by forcing them to carry a pregnancy to term; and

WHEREAS, the Brookings Center on Children and Families found that low-income women are five times more likely than their affluent peers to experience an unintended pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, a lack of access will have serious impacts on social mobility and economic outcomes in our cities as Brookings notes that "unplanned childbearing is associated with higher rates of poverty, less family stability, and worse outcomes for children"; and

WHEREAS, experts cite evidence for the disproportionate and unequal impact abortion restrictions have on people who are already marginalized—including Black and Brown communities, Indigenous communities, other people of color, people with low incomes, young people, LGBTQ communities, immigrants, and people with disabilities.

WHEREAS, in overturning the 50 years of precedent of *Roe v. Wade* after recently publicly and privately acknowledging it as "settled law," a majority of Supreme Court justices have instead established an unfortunate modern precedent that demonstrates to the American people that the institution itself is not committed to upholding its own past rulings; and

WHEREAS, this ruling signals that the Supreme Court of the United States could open the door to revisit other sacred "settled" matters such as civil rights and voting rights without regard for precedent.

WHEREAS, a majority of Pennsylvania and US voters do not support anti-abortion laws, as shown by the 2020 Franklin & Marshall poll results that 83% of Pennsylvania residents believe abortion should be legal in all or certain cases, and the 2022 Gallup poll results that 85% of the American public believe that abortion should be legal in all or certain circumstances.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the State College Borough Council decries the Supreme Court's decision to strike down *Roe v. Wade* without consideration for how revoking the precedent will diminish federalism and the institution itself, or impact our residents' ability to access critical healthcare services with a resulting patchwork of laws banning or restricting abortion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State College Borough Council joins the United States Conference of Mayors to call on Members of Congress to swiftly pass legislation to codify an individual's right to choose and urges governors and state legislatures to protect access to healthcare and individual freedoms in the absence of protections at the federal level in the meantime;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State College Borough Council calls upon the government of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to uphold its current abortion law (Title 18, Chapter 32) and to encourage local officials and law enforcement to pledge to protect access for all individuals who can become pregnant to such services as described in our current law;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State College Borough Council pledges to allocate funding from current and future budgets to support groups that work to provide access, including transportation and sheltering services, for individuals to access abortions as currently permitted by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State College Borough Council pledges to work with community groups to expand such access;

RESOLVED, This 11th day of July 2022, by the Council of the Borough of State College.

ATTEST:

BOROUGH OF STATE COLLEGE:

Assistant Borough Secretary

President of Council

