

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____ 32054 _____

A RESOLUTION in support of abortion rights and other reproductive rights, in opposition to the U.S. Supreme Court draft majority opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*; and urging state and federal elected officials to codify abortion rights and other reproductive rights.

WHEREAS, on May 3, 2022, thousands gathered in cities across the United States, including in Seattle, to protest a leaked draft decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, which would overturn the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision that has protected the freedom to seek an abortion since 1973; and

WHEREAS, laws restricting access to abortion disproportionately impact poor and working-class people and people of color, because wealthier people have the resources to pay a private doctor exorbitant fees or travel to where quality reproductive healthcare is available; and

WHEREAS, historian Ruth Rosen explained in *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America* that “Advocates of abortion reform estimated that close to one million women had illegal abortions annually before the procedure became legal in 1973, and they attributed some five thousand deaths directly to illegal abortions,” showing that throughout history, laws banning abortion do not stop them from happening; and

WHEREAS, while abortion has been legalized nationwide since 1973, working-class women and LGBTQ people have continued to have only limited access to reproductive healthcare, as a result of the inequity and inefficiency of the private, for-profit healthcare and health insurance industries; and

1 WHEREAS, overturning *Roe v. Wade* would disregard the human right to bodily autonomy,
2 which could also set a legal precedent used to overturn healthcare and other legal rights
3 for LGBTQ people, while transgender care is already under assault; and

4 WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council recognizes that pressure from mass movements can and has
5 affected U.S. Supreme Court decisions – they are not simply mechanical applications of
6 legal text; and

7 WHEREAS, the U.S. Supreme Court that decided *Roe v. Wade* by a 7-2 vote in 1973 was also
8 majority Republican-appointed, but ruled in favor of abortion rights under pressure from
9 the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which was itself emboldened
10 by the powerful movements for Black freedom and against the war in Vietnam; and

11 WHEREAS, in recent years mass movements in Argentina, Ireland, and Mexico have overturned
12 anti-abortion laws and won new reproductive rights; and

13 WHEREAS, the Democratic Party, with a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, a
14 majority in the U.S. Senate, and the Presidency, has the power to codify abortion access,
15 pass universal single-payer healthcare, eliminate the filibuster, and expand the size of the
16 Supreme Court to end its domination by extreme right-wing justices, if they have the
17 political will to do so; and

18 WHEREAS, Sister Song, the nation’s largest multi-ethnic Reproductive Justice collective,
19 coined the term “reproductive justice” in 1994 to uplift the needs of the most
20 marginalized women, families, and communities; and

21 WHEREAS, Sister Song believes that reproductive justice is a human right, including but
22 broader than abortion, and that there is no choice when there is no access to reproductive
23 healthcare; and

1 WHEREAS, patients in Washington state are hampered from accessing the full range of
2 reproductive healthcare due to hospital consolidation, leading to almost 50 percent of
3 Washington's hospital beds being in Catholic or otherwise religiously-affiliated facilities
4 where reproductive healthcare is limited; and

5 WHEREAS, by passing SB 5602 in 2019, Washington became the only state in the nation to
6 require hospitals to publicly disclose their reproductive healthcare policies on their
7 websites and submit publicly available forms regarding the reproductive healthcare
8 services available at their facilities; and

9 WHEREAS, HB 1851, passed in 2022, protected Washingtonians from criminalization for their
10 reproductive healthcare decisions and pregnancy outcomes, confirmed that all qualified
11 licensed providers in Washington can offer abortion care to their patients, and ensured
12 that Washington law protects all Washingtonians' right to abortion care, regardless of
13 gender or gender identity; and

14 WHEREAS, nonetheless many patients remain unaware that their healthcare provider will not
15 provide them with the full range of healthcare options they may require, especially those
16 in crisis requiring emergent care, and those traveling across state lines who may be
17 unfamiliar with local health systems; and

18 WHEREAS, health care entities' restrictions, including discriminatory restrictions, should not
19 hinder patient access to reproductive care; and

20 WHEREAS, the Keep Our Care Act would prevent health entity consolidations from moving
21 forward if they negatively impacted communities' access to affordable quality care,
22 including reproductive, end-of-life, and gender affirming care; and

1 WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council recognizes that access to abortion, bodily autonomy, and
2 other personal rights can be won and defended if there is a sufficiently powerful
3 grassroots social movement; and

4 WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools students have called for districtwide student demonstrations
5 in defense of abortion rights on Friday, May 13, 2022; and

6 WHEREAS, Planned Parenthood has called for a national day of action in defense of abortion
7 rights on Saturday, May 14, 2022; NOW, THEREFORE,

8 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE THAT:**

9 Section 1. The Seattle City Council is entirely opposed to the U.S. Supreme Court draft
10 majority opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, which would overturn *Roe*
11 *v. Wade*. The Seattle City Council urges Supreme Court justices to retract their support for this
12 opinion and to respect the bodily autonomy of women and LGBTQ people.

13 Section 2. The Seattle City Council urges federal elected officials to pass legislation
14 codifying the full right to abortion and other reproductive healthcare nationwide. The Seattle
15 City Council urges progressive Democrats in the U.S. House and U.S. Senate to use their full
16 power, not only to vote for such legislation, but also to fight to end the filibuster and use their
17 resources to build mass grassroots action to pass it. The Seattle City Council requests that the
18 Office of Intergovernmental Relations convey this resolution to Seattle’s federal Congressional
19 delegation.

20 Section 3. The Seattle City Council declares its support of the Keep Our Care Act. The
21 Seattle City Council requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs convey this resolution
22 to Seattle's state elected delegation.

1 Section 4. Seattle City Council intends to consider action that would ensure patients are
2 informed of the reproductive healthcare available to them at their chosen healthcare provider.

3 Section 5. The Seattle City Council intends to appropriate City funds in a 2022
4 supplemental budget to fund expanded access to reproductive healthcare. These funds would be
5 allocated to organizations that deliver programs and services in support of abortion care and
6 access, such as the Northwest Abortion Access Fund and independent abortion clinics.

7 Section 6. The Seattle City Council strongly supports the grassroots organizing and
8 movement building required to put social pressure on elected officials and the judiciary to defend
9 against this historic attack on the rights of women, pregnant people, and the LGBTQ community.
10 The Seattle City Council encourages Seattle residents to participate in the student demonstrations
11 planned for Friday, May 13, 2022, and the national day of action planned for Saturday, May 14,
12 2022.

1 Adopted by the City Council the 10th day of May, 2022,
2 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this 10th day of
3 May, 2022.

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5 President Pro Tem of the City Council

6 Filed by me this 10th day of May, 2022.

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8 Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

9 (Seal)