

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION 31889

..title

A RESOLUTION in support of the right to bodily autonomy and the right to access a safe and legal abortion; and affirming ~~the~~The City of Seattle’s commitment to act consistently and proactively in support of those rights.

..body

WHEREAS, state governments across the nation are passing laws that expressly or effectively

ban abortion in those states; and

WHEREAS, voters in Washington State have repeatedly affirmed Washingtonians’ right to reproductive freedom and privacy, as demonstrated by the passage in 1991 of Initiative 120, otherwise known as the Reproductive Privacy Act, and by the defeat in 1998 of Initiative 694, which would have criminalized abortions later in pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, everybody needs access to a range of safe, affordable, and comprehensive reproductive health care services throughout their life, including screenings for cancer and sexually transmitted infections, contraceptive services, abortion care, prenatal care, and labor and delivery services; and

WHEREAS, some of the bills proposed or passed by various states would prevent people from obtaining an abortion once a fetal heartbeat can be detected, which may be as soon as six weeks after conception, when many people are not yet aware of their pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, some of these bills also threaten doctors with prison time of up to 99 years and fines for performing abortions in their capacity as medical professionals; and

WHEREAS, such bills will have profoundly negative impacts on the health of people that are able to become pregnant by effectively eliminating access to all legal abortion services; and

1 WHEREAS, since 1976, federal legislation known as the Hyde Amendment has prohibited the
2 use of Medicaid for abortion services, and because of the systems of structural racism and
3 socioeconomic inequality, people of color are more likely to use Medicaid for health care
4 coverage and are therefore disproportionately impacted by the lack of choices to access a
5 safe abortion; and

6 WHEREAS, given the lack of consistent and affordable access to high-quality contraceptive
7 services available to communities of color, people of color are more likely to experience
8 unintended pregnancy than white people, reinforcing the disproportionate impact of
9 restrictions on safe abortion care; and

10 WHEREAS, such bills will simultaneously eliminate safe and legal options for abortions and
11 drive people seeking an abortion to illegal providers, who are unregulated and subject to
12 no safety standards, putting pregnant peoples' health at risk; and

13 WHEREAS, the State of Washington is not immune from these attacks on bodily autonomy, as
14 demonstrated by the introduction of House Bill 2154 in the 2019 Regular Session of the
15 State Legislature; and

16 WHEREAS, rather than implementing regressive and extreme policies banning or severely
17 restricting access to abortion, policy makers should instead focus on the maintenance and
18 expansion of supportive services whose aim is the reduction of unintended pregnancies,
19 the minimization of sexual violence, and the success of all families by investing in
20 comprehensive sex education, access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health
21 care, and quality affordable childcare; NOW, THEREFORE,

22 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE**
23 **MAYOR CONCURRING, THAT:**

1 Section 1. The City of Seattle unequivocally condemns any attempt by a local, state, or
2 federal government to restrict, prohibit, or otherwise impede access to safe and legal abortion
3 care. We recognize that access to safe and legal abortion care is vital to the health of all people in
4 our community. Through investments in Seattle-King County Public Health, the City of Seattle
5 demonstrates its ongoing commitment to ensuring that the people of King County, including
6 Seattle, have access to affordable, compassionate, and medically accurate abortion care they can
7 trust.

8 Section 2. The City of Seattle remains committed to eliminating stigma surrounding
9 abortion so that every person in our city who makes the choice to access safe and legal abortion
10 care will feel supported, welcome, and safe doing so. Likewise, ~~the~~ The City of Seattle will
11 continue to stand with healthcare providers, such as Planned Parenthood, who provide essential
12 high-quality, affordable health care, and sex education to thousands of Seattle residents, with or
13 without insurance coverage.

14 Section 3. The Council requests that the City Attorney’s Office work collaboratively with
15 the Council to review legislation in other jurisdictions in the United States banning abortions and
16 discuss potential ways the City can support challenging those bills. Such legislation includes
17 Ohio Senate Bill 23 and the expansive legislation recently passed by the Alabama State
18 Legislature and signed by Alabama Governor Kay Ivey, as a direct challenge to the United States
19 Supreme Court’s landmark *Roe v. Wade* ruling of 1973.

20 Section 4. The Council requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Relations deliver
21 copies of this resolution, upon adoption, to the Governor of Washington State, the Speaker of the
22 Washington State House of Representatives, and the Majority Leader of the Washington State
23 Senate, and to any other interested parties.

