CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

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

WHEREAS, overturning *Roe v. Wade* would disregard the human right to bodily autonomy, which could also set a legal precedent used to overturn healthcare and other legal rights for LGBTQ people, while

transgender care is already under assault; and

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Sister Song, the nation's largest multi-ethnic Reproductive Justice collective, coined the term "reproductive justice" in 1994 to uplift the needs of the most marginalized women, families, and communities; and

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

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

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

WHEREAS, HB 1851, passed in 2022, protected Washingtonians from criminalization for their reproductive

healthcare decisions and pregnancy outcomes, confirmed that all qualified licensed providers in

Washington can offer abortion care to their patients, and ensured that Washington law protects all

Washingtonians' right to abortion care, regardless of gender or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, nonetheless many patients remain unaware that their healthcare provider will not provide them

with the full range of healthcare options they may require, especially those in crisis requiring emergent

care, and those traveling across state lines who may be unfamiliar with local health systems; and

WHEREAS, health care entities' restrictions, including discriminatory restrictions, should not hinder patient

access to reproductive care; and

WHEREAS, the Keep Our Care Act would prevent health entity consolidations from moving forward if they

negatively impacted communities' access to affordable quality care, including reproductive, end-of-life,

and gender affirming care; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle City Council recognizes that access to abortion, bodily autonomy, and other personal

rights can be won and defended if there is a sufficiently powerful grassroots social movement; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Public Schools students have called for districtwide student demonstrations in defense of

abortion rights on Friday, May 13, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Planned Parenthood has called for a national day of action in defense of abortion rights on

Saturday, May 14, 2022; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. The Seattle City Council is entirely opposed to the U.S. Supreme Court draft majority

opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which would overturn *Roe v. Wade*. The Seattle

City Council urges Supreme Court justices to retract their support for this opinion and to respect the bodily

autonomy of women and LGBTQ people.

Section 2. The Seattle City Council urges federal elected officials to pass legislation codifying the full

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

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

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

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

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

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2022, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2022.

_____

President _____ of the City Council

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2022.

_____

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)