

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By [Elisha Brown](#)



*Pressure is building on the Florida Supreme Court to scope a potential abortion rights ballot measure and determine the constitutionality of the state's 15-week ban.
(Danielle J. Brown)*

Anti-abortion groups want to make their case before the Florida Supreme Court to reject a proposed amendment to the state constitution.

Attorney General Ashley Moody and other abortion opponents asked the high court to schedule a hearing about the petition's validity, [Florida Phoenix](#) reports.

Moody, **Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America** and **Florida Voters Against Extremism** argued in court filings that the proposed measure's language is ambiguous and misleading. They want the justices to reject the effort.

Floridians Protecting Freedom, an abortion rights coalition sponsoring the petition, aims to get the issue on the ballot next year. Their proposal asks voters to guarantee abortion access through fetal viability or later if a doctor deems the procedure necessary to protect a patient's health.

The group says their initiative meets state requirements by addressing a single subject in direct, brief language, according to court documents. **As of Monday, coalition members have collected more than 491,000 out of the nearly 892,000 petition signatures needed to make the November 2024 ballot**, according to the [Phoenix](#).

Meanwhile, both sides are waiting for the conservative-leaning court to rule on Florida's 15-week abortion ban.

A ruling in favor of the state would strike down a decades-old precedent protecting abortion rights based on privacy tenets and allow a six-week restriction to take effect 30 days after the Florida Supreme Court's decision.

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Seven Texans forced to travel out-of-state for abortions join lawsuit against state

More than two dozen Texas women are now suing the state to allow abortions for a broader range of pregnancy complications after seven others joined the case on Tuesday, our partner newsroom [Texas Tribune](#) reports. **The new plaintiffs said doctors denied them abortion care for their medically complex pregnancies** — situations where child birth could threaten their lives or where the fetus was not expected to survive. Several women had to travel elsewhere for treatment.

For example, **Danielle Mathisen was 18 weeks pregnant in September 2021, the same month Texas enacted a six-week abortion ban, when her fetus received a “laundry list” of diagnoses**, including a malformed brain. “It felt like an out of body experience,” said Mathisen, who is training to become an OB-GYN in Hawaii. “I thought the wires got crossed and it was the girl next door’s ultrasound, because surely nothing could be wrong with my own pregnancy.” Mathisen told the Tribune that her doctor, who is also her aunt, could not help her due to the abortion ban. She flew to New Mexico to terminate her nonviable pregnancy.

The women are represented by the **Center for Reproductive Rights**, a national organization behind similar lawsuits in **Idaho, Tennessee and Oklahoma**. In August, a Texas judge ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, but the attorney general's office quickly appealed the decision, blocking it from taking effect. (Since September, state law has allowed abortions for [two life-threatening conditions](#): ectopic pregnancies and premature ruptures of the membrane.) Arguments before the Texas Supreme Court are set for Nov. 28.

Ohio GOP strategizes after abortion, marijuana ballot measures prevail



*Rep. Jennifer Gross, an Ohio Republican and abortion opponent, backs a proposal that would give legislators the power to implement a reproductive rights amendment.
(Graham Stokes/Ohio Capital Journal)*

Republicans in Ohio are mulling how to move forward after measures that protected reproductive rights and legalized marijuana won voters' approval last week despite their opposition, [Ohio Capital Journal](#) reports. **Gov. Mike DeWine called for patience while Republican lawmakers pushed to defy the outcome.**

In a press release sent by conservative groups Faith2Action and Ohio Values Voters, Republican **Rep. Jennifer Gross argued without evidence that “foreign billionaires” funded Issue 1**, the reproductive rights amendment. Gross is drafting a measure that aims to give the GOP-controlled Legislature “exclusive authority” to implement Issue 1. This move, first reported by [Cleveland.com](#), would diminish the power of the courts.

Nearly 30 state representatives signed a letter promising to “do everything in their power” to fight the removal of abortion restrictions. They called Issue 1's language “vague” and “intentionally deceptive,” even though the summary that appeared before voters was written by the Republican-led Ohio Ballot Board. The board [approved](#) a ballot title that focused primarily on abortion, instead of the full scope of reproductive health protections described in the measure.

South Carolina nonprofit offers free emergency contraception

New Morning Foundation, a Columbia, South Carolina-based nonprofit, has distributed more than 800 of the 5,000 packs of morning-after pills it received from a company called Julie, [South Carolina Daily Gazette](#) reports. Residents can request contraceptives online or visit partner clinics statewide. **There are no income or insurance requirements needed to receive the pills.**

Sarah Kelley, chief operations officer of the group, said, “Because emergency contraception is actually available over the counter — it doesn’t require a prescription — we put our brains together and thought, ‘How can we make this as easy as possible for someone to get?’” Kelley said the team “decided that mail order was the best way to make sure that it could go directly to the person who needs it, really before they even need it.”

Nearly three months ago, the South Carolina Supreme Court [deemed](#) a **six-week abortion ban** constitutional, despite striking down a similar ban in January. Providers [appealed](#) the decision on the grounds that embryonic activity, not a fetal heartbeat, can be detected via ultrasounds at six weeks of pregnancy. Most people don’t know they’re pregnant at that stage, according to doctors.

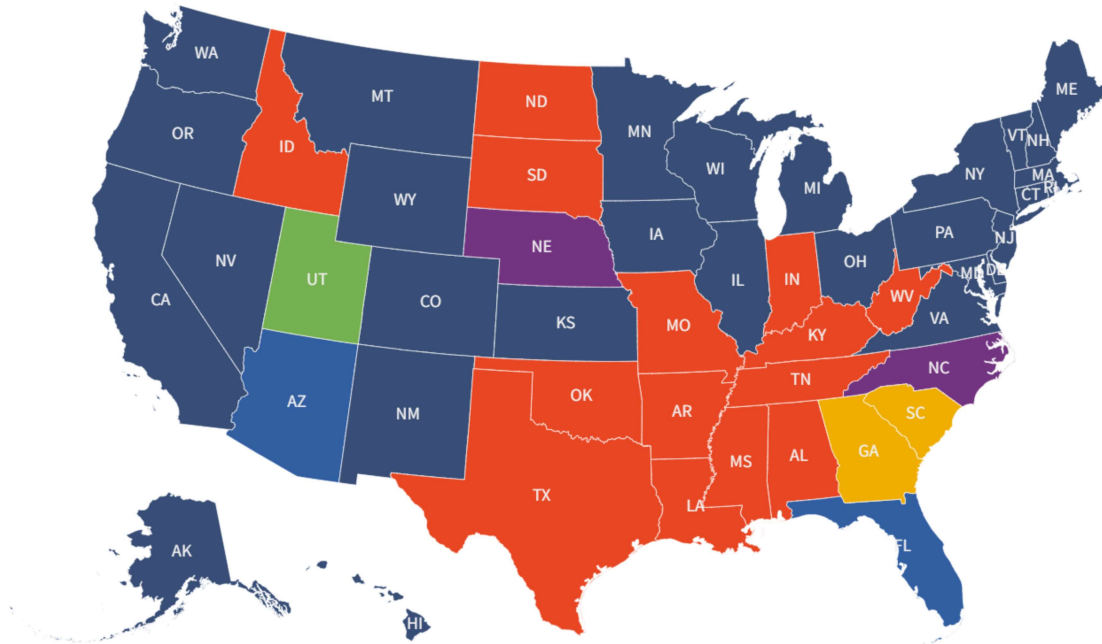
THE PULL *Commentary from Indiana*

“The truth is, we aren’t different than everyone around us. The people of this state disagree with Indiana government on both issues. Hoosiers oppose the abortion ban the Indiana General Assembly passed last year. Hoosiers also oppose the ban on marijuana. If the question were asked here like it was in Ohio, the result would have gone straight-up Buckeye.” — **Michael Leppert**, contributor, [Indiana Capital Chronicle](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- Oregon’s subsidized child care program is facing a \$123 million budget shortfall and an indefinite waiting list. ([Oregon Capital Chronicle](#))
- Republican lawmakers in Kentucky said they’re open to adding rape and incest exceptions to the state’s abortion bans. ([Kentucky Herald-Leader](#))
- The only abortion clinic in Jackson, Wyoming, is closing next month due to high costs. ([Wyoming Public Media](#))
- A Chicago City Council committee approved a buffer zone around a clinic that has been the site of anti-abortion protests. ([Chicago Sun-Times](#))
- Minnesota Democrats are discussing whether to put an abortion question on the ballot next year. ([Axios Twin Cities](#))

STATE BY STATE Abortion access in the U.S.



Open this interactive map in your browser

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