

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

Thanks for being here and supporting our work.



By Elisha Brown



*Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed the Reproductive Health Act this week. The legislation strikes down several clinic regulations, streamlines insurance riders and requires public universities to provide accurate abortion information.
(John King/Michigan Advance)*

A year after Michigan voters passed an amendment to protect reproductive rights, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed additional safeguards into law on Tuesday.

The Reproductive Health Act repeals several restrictions, including the removal of some regulations that target abortion clinics. “These are politically motivated, medically

unnecessary restrictions on hallway width, ceiling height, HVAC system, and janitor's closets," Whitmer said.

The new laws also remove a separate insurance rider requirement for abortions stemming from sexual assault. Another provision ensures that students at Michigan's public universities will have access to accurate information about their reproductive health care options. "Young adults deserve the same medical choices that every other patient gets," Whitmer said.

But the legislation that landed on Whitmer's desk lacked key reforms, [Michigan Advance](#) reports. Within Democrats' slim majority, Rep. Karen Whitsett dissented, rejecting a proposal that would have allowed Medicaid to cover all abortions. Another measure that would have eliminated 24-hour waiting periods for abortions didn't make the final cut.

Rep. Laurie Pohutsky referenced the Reproductive Health Act's revisions on Tuesday. "A Democratic trifecta, as it turns out, is not a magic wand and one person's personal politics can still, unfortunately, greatly impact what we are able to do," she said.

Pohutsky said she and her colleagues will continue to fight barriers to care. "I think that there's always hope, there's always reason for optimism. We're going to continue doing the work behind the scenes to hopefully get it across the finish line next year."

We're off tomorrow for the holiday, but Reproductive Rights Today will return to inboxes Friday.

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Missouri high court denies Ashcroft's appeal of abortion ballot summaries



*The Missouri Supreme Court declined to take up an appeal of rulings against ballot summaries for an abortion rights petition.
(Annelise Hanshaw/Missouri Independent)*

The Missouri Supreme Court rejected Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft's request to hear a case over abortion ballot summaries he wrote that lower courts deemed biased and politically charged. Justices also denied an appeal to change fiscal note summaries written by the state auditor, [Missouri Independent](#) reports. The court decisions came Monday evening, less than a week after Ashcroft filed an appeal.

Ballot titles Ashcroft wrote for an abortion rights petition said they would "allow for dangerous, unregulated and unrestricted abortions." A St. Louis physician representing Missourians for Constitutional Freedom, the group behind the initiative, challenged the secretary of state's language for six of the 11 versions filed this spring. Circuit Judge Jon Beetem rewrote the six Ashcroft's ballot titles in September, and an appeals court agreed with his decision last month.

A separate effort to put abortion on the Missouri ballot is being led by Jamie Corley, a longtime GOP operative. That initiative filed in August would add rape and incest exceptions to the state's near-total ban, and allow abortion up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. Corley recently sued Ashcroft over ballot titles he wrote, too, but that lawsuit is ongoing. **Missouri Women and Family Research Fund, Corley's political action committee, started signature-gathering this week.** Campaigners behind the competing proposals need 170,000 signatures from registered voters by May.

Oklahoma AG sues Biden administration for withholding family planning funds

Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond filed a [federal lawsuit](#) Monday against the Biden administration after **the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services withdrew \$4.5 million in Title X funding from the state**. HHS reallocated the funds to abortion rights groups like Planned Parenthood after the state, citing its restrictive abortion law, **refused to provide abortion counseling at federal reproductive health clinics**, [Oklahoma Voice](#) reports. The state bans most abortions.

“It is patently discriminatory to deny Oklahoma these critical funds, particularly when federal law makes it clear that Title X cannot be used for abortion,” Drummond [said](#) in a press release. “I will continue to fight against federal overreach in all forms.”

Republican Gov. Kevin Stitt called the Biden administration’s actions an “abuse of power.” County health departments stopped offering confidential services, such as pregnancy tests and birth control, to minors after the loss of federal funds. Oklahoma Health Commissioner Keith Reed said the legislature has provided state funding to make up for the lost money.

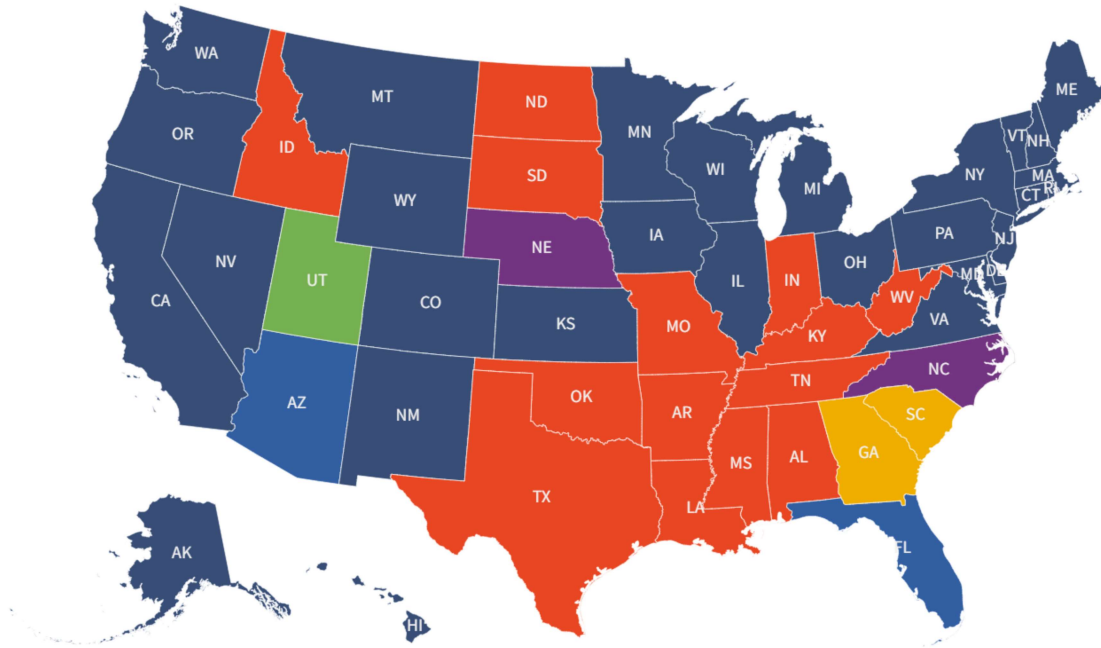
THE PULL *Commentary from Indiana*

“Some low-hanging fruit would be for the Indiana General Assembly to create a line item in the state budget for doula care for Medicaid recipients, something that has proven to reduce maternal deaths.” — **Cathy Ritchie**, Women4Change interim CEO, [Indiana Capital Chronicle](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- Alaska’s Planned Parenthood chapter is suing the state to permanently allow advanced practice clinicians — physician assistants, nurse practitioners and nurse midwives — to provide abortions. ([Alaska Public Media](#))
- Ohio Women’s Alliance is one of the only Black-led organizations involved in the campaign for a reproductive rights amendment. ([ELLE](#))
- Pregnant teens have few options in Texas, which doesn’t require schools to teach sex education. ([Texas Public Radio](#))
- Health care providers are more likely to report people to law enforcement for self-managed abortion, according to the reproductive justice organization If/When/How. ([Mother Jones](#))

STATE BY STATE *Abortion access in the U.S.*



Open this interactive map in your browser

Track state-level developments on reproductive rights anytime at [News From The States](#). Send tips and thoughts to ebrown@statesnewsroom.com, and follow her on Twitter [@elishacbrown](#).

©News From The States, all rights reserved.

www.newsfromthestates.com | info@newsfromthestates.com

Manage your donation and subscription preferences [here](#).

Add info@newsfromthestates.com to your [address book](#) to ensure delivery.

Did someone forward you this newsletter? [Click here](#) to get it delivered to your inbox.

States Newsroom – News From The States

1414 Raleigh Rd #127

Chapel Hill, NC 27517

United States

You are receiving this email because you opted in via our website or States Newsroom. If you believe you received this message in error or wish to change your subscription, please (Unsubscribing is not supported in previews).