

# News From The States

## REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By [Elisha Brown](#)



*Dr. Marcela Azevedo, founder of Ohio Physicians for Reproductive Rights, celebrates after Issue 1's passage on Nov. 7, 2023. Abortion rights supporters say they're not surprised by Republicans' pledges to attack the reproductive rights amendment that voters approved.  
(Graham Stokes/Ohio Capital Journal)*

Groups that rallied Ohio voters to pass Issue 1 are preparing for a legal fight over the amendment's enactment.

Some Republican lawmakers have pledged to oppose Issue 1, despite other Republican leaders' calls for restraint, [Ohio Capital Journal](#) reports.

"There's a certain part of the legislature that is extremists that has their own beliefs and agenda," said Dr. Marcela Azevedo, president of Ohio Physicians for Reproductive Rights.

“It’s not based on what their voters believe and want.”

Rep. Jennifer Gross sponsored a proposal to put the amendment’s enactment in the hands of the GOP-controlled legislature, and another lawmaker introduced a bill that would give people tax breaks for donating to anti-abortion crisis pregnancy centers.

House Speaker Jason Stephens dismissed the bill Gross sponsored, calling for maternal and child health care reform instead. But Senate President Matt Huffman has suggested a 15-week ban.

“It’s a great opportunity for the leadership in that caucus to prove that they can be the adults in the room,” said Gabriel Mann, spokesperson for Pro-Choice Ohio and Ohioans United for Reproductive Rights. “We’ll see if that happens.”

Nearly 57% of Ohioans voted in favor of protecting the right to abortion through fetal viability, along with safeguarding rights to child birth, birth control, miscarriage management and fertility treatments. **Issue 1 is set to take effect next month.**

**Clinicians are still providing care while bracing for the likely legal battles ahead, but some said they are not surprised by the pledges to uphold abortion restrictions.**

Republican promises to stop Issue 1 despite voter approval would put a “national spotlight on horrible abuses of state power,” Mann said.

“If they want to continue talking about this, it’s going to give us even more opportunity to rally our supporters against it,” she said.

**THE BEAT** *States Newsroom coverage*

## Virginia Democrats prefile abortion rights amendment



*The historic facade of Virginia's General Assembly Building in Richmond. Democrats, who ran on reproductive rights this election cycle, recently won control of the House of Delegates and held the Senate. (Sarah Vogelsong/Virginia Mercury)*

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 Virginia*

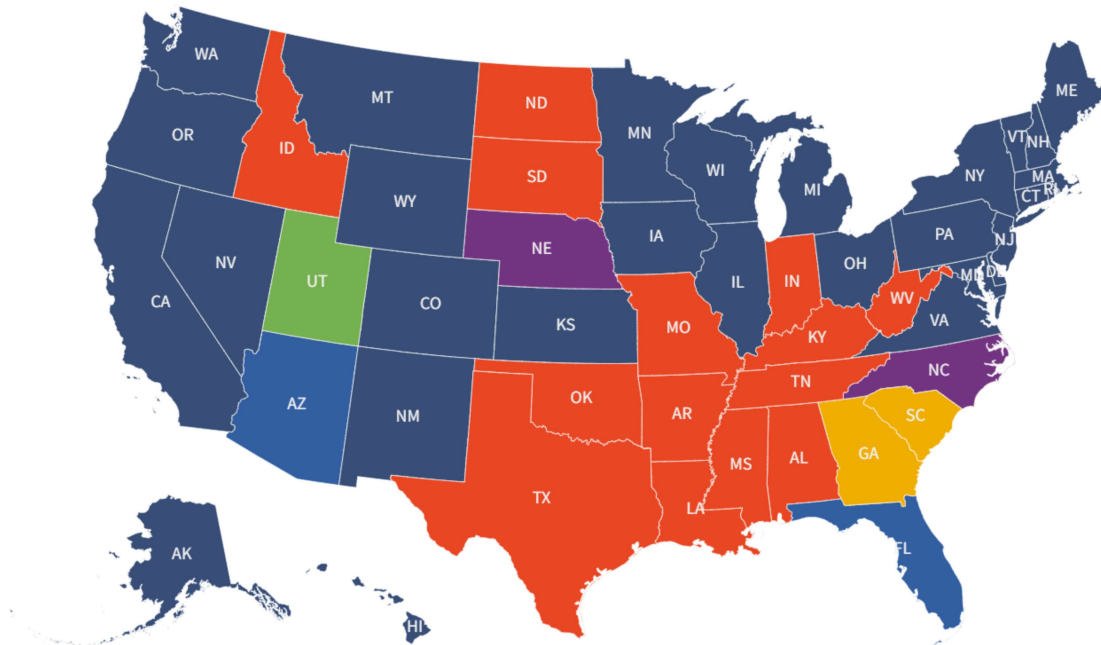
"Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin's PAC, Spirit of Virginia, crushed gubernatorial fundraising records and poured more than \$15 million behind GOP candidates by October's end,

including a late \$1.4 million ad blitz touting his abortion plan. You have to bet big to win big. Or lose big. And Youngkin lost. Big.” — **Bob Lewis**, columnist, [Virginia Mercury](#)

### **THE PULSE** *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson once defended Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas’s suggestion that landmark decisions legalizing contraception and same-sex marriage should be reconsidered. ([CNN](#))
- A Wisconsin group called Motherhood for Good wields social media prowess to advocate for reproductive rights, gun control and LGBTQ+ equality. ([The 19th\\*](#))
- Florida Democrats are banking on a possible abortion ballot measure to increase voter turnout. ([The Palm Beach Post](#))

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



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