

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By [Elisha Brown](#)



U.S. Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R-Alabama) has stalled more than 400 military leaders' promotions for months by withholding his vote for unanimous approval. Tuberville maintains the Pentagon's travel reimbursement policy for reproductive health care is illegal.
(Alex Wong/Getty Images)

For months, U.S. Sen. Tommy Tuberville has blocked unanimous consent of military promotions to protest the Pentagon's reproductive health care policy. The Alabama Republican's anti-abortion stance left hundreds of military nominees in limbo and drew bipartisan criticism.

Tuberville relented on Tuesday, saying he would lift his hold on the promotions, save for a few four-star general nominees, [States Newsroom](#) reports. Officials have said as many as 445 nominees were affected.

“We fought hard,” Tuberville said. “We did the right thing for the unborn and for our military, fighting back against executive overreach, and an abortion policy that’s not legal.”

The senator framed his hold as opposition to a U.S. Department of Defense rule that allows service members and dependents stationed in states with abortions bans or reproductive care restrictions to receive travel reimbursements. Roughly 80,000 active-duty female military personnel are based in places that enacted abortion limits after Roe v. Wade fell last year, according to a RAND [analysis](#).

He told Senate Republicans “it’s been a long fight” and blamed the Democratic Party for his stall. **Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) could have called a vote for each nominee to the floor individually, a move that would have taken hours of debate.**

Sen. Jack Reed, a Rhode Island Democrat, crafted a [resolution](#) last month that would have temporarily changed Senate rules and allowed senators to approve large blocs of nominations simultaneously.

Some GOP senators grew [frustrated](#) with Tuberville but said they didn’t want to change the chamber’s rules. “Hopefully we won’t get to that point,” Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah said last week.

VoteVets, a left-leaning veterans advocacy group, weighed in on Tuberville’s reversal. “Still, Tuberville is maintaining a hold on a handful of top positions,” Mary Kasynski, the group’s government relations director, said in a [statement](#). “We will not rest until they are also confirmed.”

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Pregnant Texas woman with fatal fetal diagnosis asks judge for an abortion



*The lawsuit comes a week after the Texas Supreme Court heard a high-profile case calling for pregnancy complication exemptions to the state's abortion bans.
(Getty Images)*

A Dallas woman whose fetus received a likely fatal diagnosis last week asked a judge to allow her to have an abortion, [Texas Tribune](#) reports. **Doctors recently told Kate Cox that her fetus has full trisomy 18, a chromosomal anomaly that is almost always fatal.** The Center for Reproductive Rights is representing Cox, who asked for a temporary injunction against the state's near-total abortion laws so her doctors can end the unviable pregnancy. **Cox is high-risk, given her history of Cesarean sections and high-blood sugar.**

"I'm trying to do what is best for my baby and myself, but the state of Texas is making us both suffer," Cox said in a press release. **Her lawsuit comes a week after the state Supreme Court heard arguments in a case seeking to allow abortions for serious pregnancy complications that could affect the mother or fetus.** Molly Duane, a senior staff attorney for the Center for Reproductive Rights, told the Tribune that it's unclear if the courts will act quickly enough to provide Cox the care she seeks. "This is not a normal or reasonable or feasible way for health care to be practiced in this country," Duane said.

Missouri abortion rights petitions face fundraising hurdles

Money is often behind successful abortion ballot measures, [Missouri Independent](#) reports. A Michigan abortion rights coalition spent more than [\\$30 million](#) on an amendment campaign last year. In October, nearly [\\$29 million](#) was donated to the group behind Ohio's reproductive rights petition.

Two efforts to put an abortion question on the Missouri ballot next year are underway. “Any campaign that would move forward is left to contend with a myriad of challenges, including a severely constricted timeline,” said Mallory Schwarz, Abortion Action Missouri’s executive director. Democratic strategist Jack Cardetti told the Independent that **signature-gathering is a “daunting-task” that typically costs several million dollars.**

A petition filed by **Missourians for Constitutional Freedom** in March seeks to overturn the state’s near-total ban and allow lawmakers to regulate abortion after fetal viability. **The group hasn’t officially launched its campaign yet and has raised less than \$13,500,** per the Independent. The effort has faced legal [challenges](#) with Republican officials over fiscal notes and ballot titles. Campaigners have yet to pick one of the [11 different proposals](#) it submitted to the state. Only the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri has publicly endorsed the effort.

Another initiative petition launched in August by GOP congressional staffer Jamie Corley would add rape and incest exceptions to state’s ban and allow abortion through 12 weeks of pregnancy in most cases. **Money behind Corley’s political action committee — the Missouri Women and Family Research Fund — won’t be revealed until campaign finance reports are released in January. But volunteers have started gathering petition signatures.** The proposed measure faced criticism for requiring pregnant rape victims to report their assault to a [hotline](#).

Six governors seek clarity on new birth control pill insurance coverage

A group of Democratic governors sent a [letter](#) to U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra this week, calling for clarity on insurance coverage of [Opill](#), the first birth control pill available without a prescription. Governors representing **California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Mexico, North Carolina** and **Pennsylvania** urged the Biden administration to ensure the new pill — approved in July and set to hit the market early next year — will be no cost for Americans covered under the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid.

“As Governors, we see firsthand the need for affordable and accessible reproductive health coverage in our communities,” the letter states. They cited a 2020 [study](#) that shows **more U.S. women are likely to use contraception if it’s free or affordable.** The six governors are members of the Reproductive Freedom Alliance, a coalition formed in February to protect and broaden access to abortion and related health care, [Pennsylvania Capital-Star](#) reports.

THE PULL *Commentary from North Carolina*

“While we might wish fervently that the 2024 election would be about momentous topics like climate policy, the state of the economy, abortion rights and ending discrimination in all its

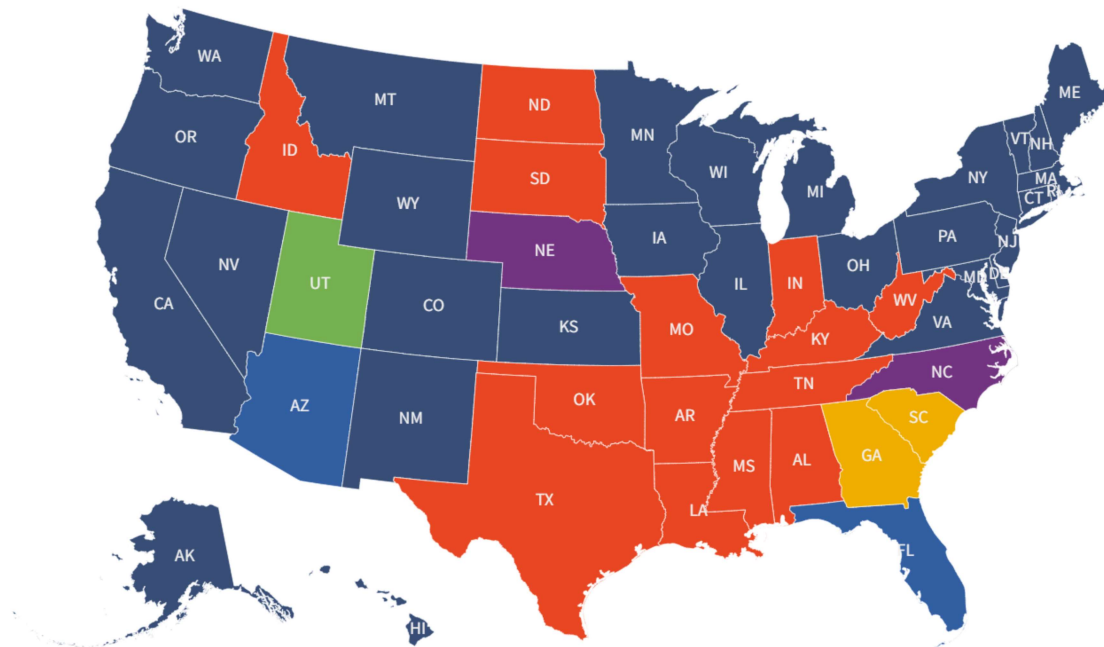
forms, unless something very unexpected happens, the stakes will be vastly more important.”

— Rob Schofield, editor, [NC Newsline](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- City council members in Greenville, South Carolina are considering a resolution that would revoke an abortion clinic’s business license. ([South Carolina Public Radio](#))
- More than 40% of Oregon parents polled said they or their partner had to quit working, turn down a job or alter their schedules due to the child care shortage. ([Oregon Capital Chronicle](#))
- Brooklyn officials gave \$45 million to the borough’s public hospitals for maternal health care improvements. ([New York Magazine](#))
- Nearly two dozen independent abortion clinics closed this year, according to a new report. ([Guardian](#))
- A Facebook group called Nancy’s Nook touts excision as a “cure” for people with endometriosis, a chronic pelvic disease. ([Mother Jones](#))

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



Open this interactive map in your browser

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1414 Raleigh Rd #127

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