

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By [Elisha Brown](#)



*A trio of Republican women in Idaho are trying to debunk misconceptions about birth control.
(Getty Images)*

Three Idaho Republican women launched a birth control organization this month.

The Idaho Contraceptive Education Network aims to expand access and inform people about safe sex. Former state Reps. Kelley Packer and Laurie Lickley and former state Senate candidate Tara Malek sit on the board, [Idaho Capital Sun](#) reports.

“Idahoans have expressed their desire to protect our right to use contraceptives,” Lickley, who [co-sponsored](#) the state’s **near-total abortion ban**, said in a news release. “There is nothing more pro-life than giving our families access to this important family planning resource.”

Packer said they started brainstorming the network after Republican Gov. Brad Little signed a [bill](#) into law clarifying that birth control pills and intrauterine devices are not considered violations of the state's abortion restrictions.

"We were seeing, in the last legislative session or two, a conflation between contraceptives and abortifacients, and that's what we want to make sure gets disconnected," Packer said.

Last year, Idaho GOP Rep. Brent Crane said he would consider banning abortion pills, emergency contraception and IUDs. Crane quickly walked back his statement, saying he was taken out of context.

Malek told the Capital Sun she hopes the group will help debunk misconceptions about birth control and serve as a resource for policymakers. "What we're talking about is each person's right, their responsibility and their very personal choice of when to start a family," she said.

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Pennsylvania Democrats push reproductive rights amendment



Democratic lawmakers and abortion rights advocates on the Pennsylvania Capitol steps in September 2022. House Democrats are pushing to add reproductive rights to the state Constitution, but Republicans hold the state Senate.

(Peter Hall/Pennsylvania Capital-Star)

Democratic lawmakers in Pennsylvania, where abortion is legal up to 24 weeks of pregnancy, have started working on a reproductive rights amendment. Reps. Liz Hanbidge and Danielle Friel Otten co-sponsored a [resolution](#) that would ask voters to constitutionally protect the right to abortion, childbirth, contraception and fertility care, [Pennsylvania Capital-Star](#) reports.

The House Judiciary Committee held a hearing for the proposal this week. “As a mother to a young girl I feel a responsibility to ensure that we protect and preserve that right,” Friel Otten said. “I do not want my daughter’s or any of our children’s personal health or economic futures to be at the mercy of a governor’s veto.”

The measure is identical to legislation introduced last year. Republican lawmakers attempted to put an anti-abortion measure on the ballot when they controlled both chambers before the midterm elections, but the [resolution](#) stalled. **The GOP holds a majority in the state Senate, but House Democrats are hopeful that the new proposal will gain bipartisan support.**

Changes to the Pennsylvania Constitution require the entire legislature to pass the same joint resolution in consecutive sessions, according to the Capital-Star. After it passes twice, the measure goes to voters. That means spring 2025 is the earliest a referendum could take place.

Inside the New Mexico Supreme Court’s hearing on local anti-abortion ordinances

Justices on the New Mexico Supreme Court grilled lawyers Wednesday over a lawsuit brought by the attorney general that argues local anti-abortion ordinances obstruct a state reproductive health care law. They also questioned Democratic Attorney General Raúl Torrez’s request to declare that pregnancy termination is a constitutional right, [Source New Mexico](#) reports.

Lawyers for the city of Hobbs and Lea County argued that the ordinances don’t violate [legislation](#) passed this year that prevents interference in reproductive or gender-affirming care, because they’re business laws. **Chief Justice Shannon Bacon said the Hobbs ordinance is clearly designed to prevent abortion providers or clinics from operating unless they follow a “moral doctrine.”**

But Lea County’s lawyer said it’s impossible to know the effect of the state law until federal courts rule on the legality of abortion pills and the validity of the **Comstock Act of 1873**. The ordinances cite the [statute](#), which prevented the mailing of anything considered obscene, including abortifacients. Anti-abortion groups argue the law is relevant again since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*.

Indiana lawmaker proposes income tax credits for fetuses

An Indiana state senator is preparing legislation that would allow expectant parents to claim fetuses on their income taxes, [Indiana Capital Chronicle](#) reports. Sen. Andy Zay, who is running for a U.S. House of Representatives seat, made the announcement in a campaign news release this week. **The credit is worth \$2,500 and could benefit about 60,000 families yearly**, according to the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency.

“As an Indiana lawmaker, it is my duty to support legislation that benefits all Hoosiers, and this is part of my effort to do so,” Zay said. “As your congressman, I will continue to author and support legislation that will provide support for all American families.” Zay opposes abortion and supports Indiana’s near-total abortion ban. **His proposal echoes a law in Georgia that allows residents to claim a \$3,000 tax credit for fetuses.** Republican lawmakers in [Ohio](#) and [Louisiana](#) have introduced similar proposals for adopting children or donating to crisis pregnancy centers.

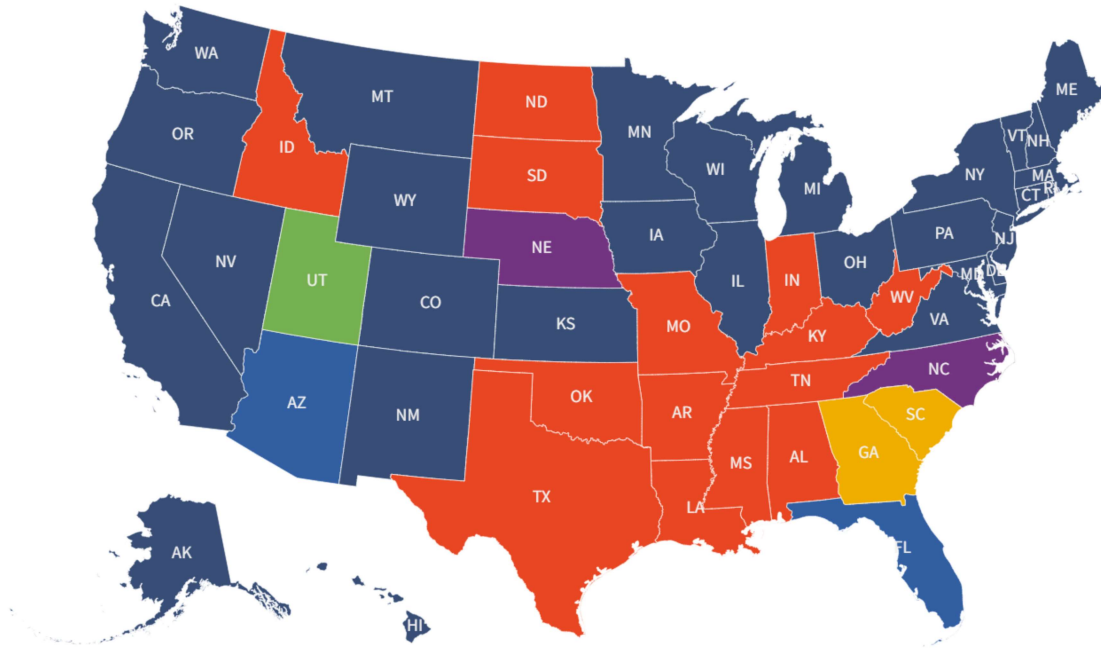
THE PULL *Commentary from Missouri*

“The weight of Missouri’s callous disregard for the complications of pregnancy, or my health and safety, felt heavy. I felt judged, stigmatized and disregarded. And this was all under the ‘protections’ of Roe.” — **Robin Utz**, advocate, [Missouri Independent](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- Less than 50% of Tennesseans polled believe abortion should be illegal, and 77% support rape and incest exceptions. ([Tennessee Lookout](#))
- Pennsylvania senators passed a bill that would ban shackling and solitary confinement for pregnant and postpartum people. ([Pennsylvania Capital-Star](#))
- Guaranteed income programs for expectant mothers have launched in Colorado and New York. ([ABC News](#))
- Republican strategist Kellyanne Conway is urging her party to talk more about protecting contraception and less about banning abortion. ([Politico](#))
- A non-hormonal male birth control pill entered a new trial this week. ([Stat News](#))

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](#).

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