

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By Elisha Brown



Anti-abortion protesters crowd the Florida Legislature in November 2022. A new bill could ban most abortions in the state.

(Diane Rado/Florida Phoenix)

Most abortions are banned after 15 weeks of pregnancy in Florida, and a six-week ban is pending, contingent on the outcome of a state Supreme Court ruling on the current law's constitutionality.

But a Republican lawmaker has introduced a bill that would outlaw all abortions unless the patient has a medical emergency, [Florida Phoenix](#) reports.

Miami-Dade County Rep. David Borrero filed a bill Monday that would punish doctors who provide abortions for any reason except a life-saving condition. The [measure](#) calls for penalties of up to 10 years in prison, a maximum \$100,000 fine or both.

Borrero's legislation defines a medical emergency as "an emergent physical condition" when an abortion is needed to save "a pregnant woman whose life is endangered by a physical disorder, physical illness or physical injury" or the pregnancy itself.

Florida Rep. Anna Eskamani, an Orlando-area Democrat, criticized the proposal, calling it "unhinged and extreme." Eskamani prefiled a bill in November that would [clarify](#) pregnant people cannot be prosecuted for getting abortions. State Senate Minority Leader Lauren Brook has introduced a parallel [bill](#) in the upper chamber, along with proposals that would [strengthen clinic buffer zones](#) and [regulate crisis pregnancy centers](#).

President Joe Biden's reelection campaign also weighed in on Borrero's measure: "Directly enabled by Donald Trump, Florida Republicans just introduced a bill that would ban nearly all abortions — even in cases of rape or incest — and criminalize doctors for doing their jobs," a campaign spokesperson said in a statement to the [Phoenix](#).

While Republicans push anti-abortion legislation, reproductive rights supporters are busy collecting petition signatures for a ballot measure seeking to secure access.

Election officials recently announced that Floridians Protecting Freedom has gathered more than 900,000 valid signatures, though the group said it has collected roughly [1 million](#) signatures.

The proposal would ask voters to guarantee abortion through [fetal viability](#) — around 22 to 26 weeks of pregnancy, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists — or beyond to protect someone's health.

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Kentucky Democrat drafts bill for rape, incest exceptions in abortion ban

State Sen. David Yates, a Louisville Democrat, plans to introduce a bill that would add rape and incest exceptions to Kentucky's abortion ban. **The bill is named after Hadley Duvall**, a 21-year-old woman who appeared in the governor's campaign ad last year and revealed that she became pregnant after her stepfather raped her when she was 12.

"Hadley's Law" would allow a physician to perform an abortion in good faith if a patient is pregnant due to sexual assault, [Kentucky Lantern](#) reports.

Yates hopes the bill gains bipartisan support, but he said the legislation won't fix all the problems with the commonwealth's abortion laws. Kentucky only permits abortion if the patient's life is at risk. Republican Senate President Robert Stivers told [KET](#) he would assign the bill to a committee.

Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear said he would sign the bill if it reaches his desk. Beshear has repeatedly pressed the Republican-controlled legislature to add exceptions to the law. He [thanked Duvall](#) for sharing her story after winning reelection in November.

Duvall told the Lantern that she hopes the bill will pass. “Unless you’ve been in this position,” she said, “you have no idea what any woman or girl is currently going through. Legislators shouldn’t feel entitled to force victims who have stories like mine to carry a baby with a rapist.”

Arizona governor pledges to protect abortion access, but court decision looms



Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs kicked off the legislative session this week, pledging to bolster abortion access. (Gloria Rebecca Gomez/Arizona Mirror)

Democratic Gov. Katie Hobbs prioritized her commitment to protect abortion rights in Arizona during her State of the State speech on Monday, [Arizona Mirror](#) reports. “I will always defend Arizonans’ freedoms, and I refuse to back down in the face of those who want to criminalize doctors and outlaw abortion,” Hobbs said. She proposed **repealing an 1864 near-total abortion ban, passing the Right to Contraception Act and ending abortion data collection.**

Removing the 19th century abortion statute could be complicated by the **Arizona Supreme Court**, which is **considering a request to reinstate the law.** Last month, the court heard [arguments](#) in a lawsuit brought by Dr. Eric Hazelrigg, the medical director of an anti-abortion clinic chain. Hazelrigg’s lawyers argued that the state’s 15-week ban and the 1864 statute could co-exist by prohibiting all abortions except to save a patient’s life. Planned Parenthood Arizona’s lawyers urged the justices to keep the current restriction intact.

Children’s nutrition program faces federal cuts amid budget negotiations

Since 1974, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) has supplied food to pregnant and postpartum women and their babies. The program helps about 6.6 million Americans. **WIC expanded significantly during the coronavirus pandemic with \$390 million in relief funds.** Funding for the federal initiative is typically bipartisan, but congressional Republicans have argued that pandemic aid given to the program should be revisited, [Stateline](#) reports.

The White House has said the program will need another \$1 billion to cover Americans who qualify in the fiscal year 2025 due to rising food costs and participation. **U.S. House Republicans do not want to increase costs to the program as budget negotiations continue.** If Congress doesn’t provide the extra money, federal officials would need to cut some 2 million participants from the program by September, the left-leaning [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#) has estimated.

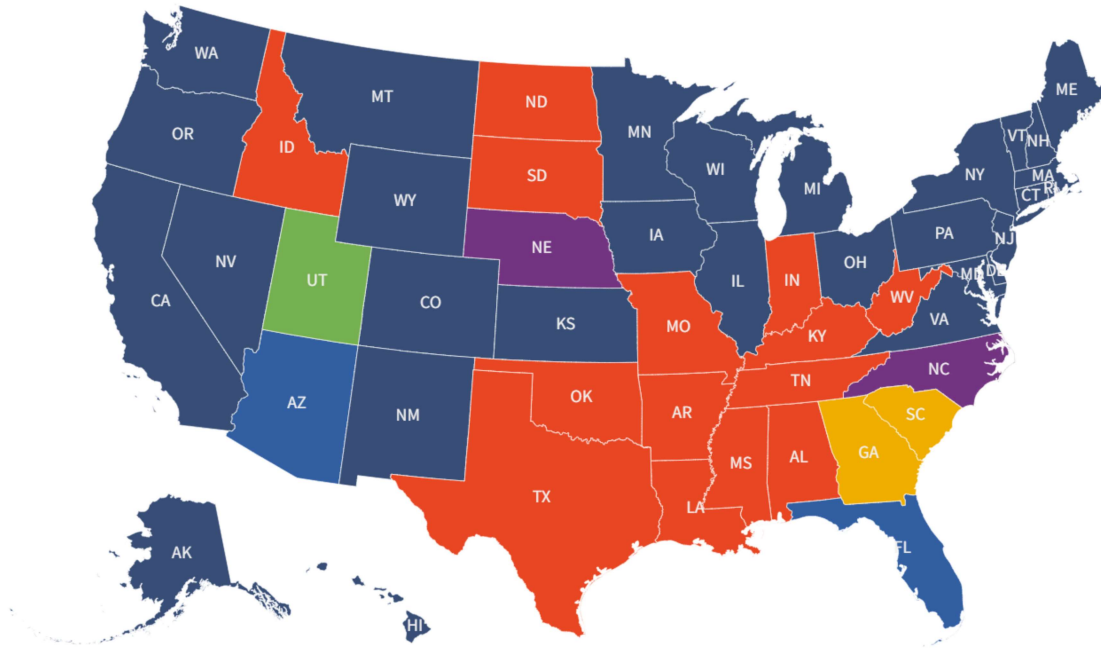
THE PULL *Commentary from Ohio*

“Before the Supreme Court rescinded half a century of abortion rights, Gov. Mike DeWine vowed he would ‘go as far as we can’ to ban abortion outright in the state. Immediately after Roe was repealed, the governor reinstated the draconian measure he signed into law in 2019 which nearly outlawed the procedure. It infamously forced a 10-year-old pregnant rape victim to flee the state for emergency medical care she and her family were denied in Ohio.” — **Marilou Johaneck**, columnist, [Ohio Capital Journal](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- Arkansans for Limited Government submitted a third draft of an abortion rights amendment. ([Arkansas Advocate](#))
- Iowa Democrats questioned proposed rules surrounding the state’s blocked six-week ban. ([Iowa Capital Dispatch](#))
- The Kansas House speaker said he doesn’t expect to push additional abortion restrictions this session. ([Kansas Reflector](#))
- Crisis pregnancy centers in New Jersey outnumber abortion providers. ([NorthJersey.com](#))

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



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