

News From The States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS TODAY

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By [Elisha Brown](#)



*New Hampshire lawmakers tabled a 15-day abortion ban and a proposed constitutional amendment fell short of the votes needed to pass.
(Annmarie Timmins/New Hampshire Bulletin)*

Three abortion-related bills failed in the New Hampshire House on Thursday, including legislation that would enact a 15-day ban and a resolution that sought to codify the state's abortion law.

Lower chamber lawmakers indefinitely postponed Republican **Rep. David Testerman's ban on abortion after 15 days of pregnancy**. Testerman also sponsored another failed bill that would require abortions provided after 15 weeks to take place in hospitals with prenatal care units and have two physicians present for the procedure, [New Hampshire Bulletin](#) reports.

Democrat Rep. Amanda Toll's proposed constitutional amendment would have asked voters to explicitly protect the state's **24-week abortion ban**. New Hampshire also allows abortions later in pregnancy if the mother's life is at risk or the fetus receives a fatal diagnosis. But the resolution didn't get the three-fifths majority of votes needed to advance a ballot measure.

"Reproductive/abortion rights are not in any way under threat in New Hampshire," GOP Rep. Katelyn Kuttab wrote in her recommendation to defeat the bill, according to the Bulletin.

Measures that could safeguard access to mifepristone, an abortion pill at the center of a major case before the U.S. Supreme Court, haven't been voted on yet.

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Abortion key issue in Florida, Pennsylvania U.S. Senate races



U.S. Sen. Rick Scott has received endorsements from 80 Florida Republicans, including Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, in his reelection bid. Scott says that abortion policy should be left to the states. (Mitch Perry/Florida Phoenix)

The Republican party is focused on regaining control of the U.S. Senate, where Democrats hold a slim majority, this November. Abortion has emerged as a key issue in the race for the Senate seats of Rick Scott, a Florida Republican, and Bob Casey, a Pennsylvania Democrat.

In **Florida**, former U.S. House Rep. **Debbie Mucarsel-Powell**, a Democrat, is looking to unseat Scott this fall, [Florida Phoenix](#) reports. "He is one of the most extreme Republicans and most radical Republicans when it comes to banning abortion," Mucarsel-Powell told the Phoenix last month. **She has repeatedly said that Scott supports a national abortion ban, which he disputed this week.** "I believe it ought to be done at the state-level," he said

while campaigning for Republican endorsements in Tallahassee on Tuesday, the [Phoenix](#) reports.

Scott backed a six-week abortion ban — the law is on hold pending a state Supreme Court ruling — that Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed last year. But Scott told [Telemundo](#) in March that a 15-week ban is “where most people are” and that “our state legislation ought to represent that.” He switched up a few weeks later on social media. “Not true,” he [wrote](#). “I am 100% pro-life and if I was still governor, I would sign this bill,” referring to the six-week restriction.

When Scott was Florida’s governor, he signed bills requiring 24-hour [waiting periods](#) and [cut off funding](#) for clinics that provide abortions. For her part, **Mucarsel-Powell is centering reproductive rights during her campaign.** “As a woman and as a mother of two daughters, this fight is personal to protect our fundamental rights as women in this country to be able to make the decisions of when and how to start a family,” she said.

Mucarsel-Powell is expected to win the Democratic primary election in late August, according to the Phoenix. **Abortion could be directly on the state ballot** this year if a petition asking voters to restore access up to fetal viability gets approval. The [high court](#) is set to review the initiative's language on Feb. 7.



U.S. Sen. Bob Casey, a Pennsylvania Democrat, will likely face off against Republican David McCormick this fall. Casey previously described himself as anti-abortion but has voted in favor of abortion rights as a congressman.

(Commonwealth Media Services)

In **Pennsylvania**, Republican **David McCormick** is the likely GOP nominee vying for Casey’s Senate seat. The race could be one of the most expensive this election cycle: Candidates have raised more than \$10 million combined so far, [Pennsylvania Capital-Star](#) reports.

McCormick, a **wealthy former hedge fund manager and U.S. Department of the Treasury [official](#)** during the George W. Bush administration, **is against abortion** but has said he supports exceptions for rape, incest or to save the mother's life. Like Scott, McCormick said he doesn't support a national abortion ban.

Casey described himself as a “pro-life Democrat” before the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in June 2022. His father, a former Pennsylvania governor who opposed abortion, was the defendant in a pivotal [1992 Supreme Court case](#) that reaffirmed Roe's precedent.

But Casey criticized the court's decision to overturn the federal right to abortion.

“Today's decision upends almost a half century of legal precedent and rips away a constitutional right that generations of women have known their entire lives,” he said in a [statement](#) at the time, arguing that Republicans would try to pass a federal ban. Casey has a history of voting for reproductive rights proposals in Congress.

Last fall, a [race](#) for a seat on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court revolved around abortion rights, and the Democratic candidate won. The court recently revived a case over a decades-old ban on most taxpayer-funded abortions, [Capital-Star](#) reports.

Mississippi House passes bill that could shorten Medicaid wait for pregnant people

Lawmakers in Mississippi's lower chamber passed [legislation](#) that could make pregnant people automatically eligible for Medicaid and cover them for 60 days after their first doctor's visit. **If the bill becomes law, expectant mothers with low incomes who want Medicaid coverage won't have to wait until their applications are processed to get health care, which can take 45 days.**

House Medicaid Committee Chairwoman Missy McGee, a Republican, told [Mississippi Today](#) that her proposal would lead to timelier prenatal care for pregnant women. McGee said presumptive Medicaid eligibility comes with about a \$560,000 price tag for states, which is less than the \$1 million it can cost the state to care for a premature baby in an intensive care unit.

Medicaid processing times have increased since millions of Americans were kicked off the program as COVID-19 pandemic aid ended. Mississippi **pediatrician Dr. Anita Henderson said the bill could help improve pregnancy outcomes.**

Child care and dependent tax credit hasn't risen with inflation, experts say

The U.S. House voted Wednesday to [expand](#) the child tax credit for low-income families. But some organizations want lawmakers to reform a separate tax credit for child and dependent care, [States Newsroom](#)'s Kelcie Moseley-Morris reports. Groups like the National Association of Tax Professionals said the credit has not kept up with inflation.

The child and dependent tax credit is intended to help lower child care costs for working families. Since 1990, child care costs have risen 214%, but the average family income has risen 143%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. A [bill](#) floating in Congress would expand the credit, but it hasn't received a hearing.

THE PULL *Commentary from Wisconsin*

"Republican Reps. Joel Kitchens' and Ron Tusler's breezy confidence that their studies of veterinary science and the Bible qualified them to override the reproductive health care decisions of women and (human) medical experts is a direct consequence of gerrymandering.

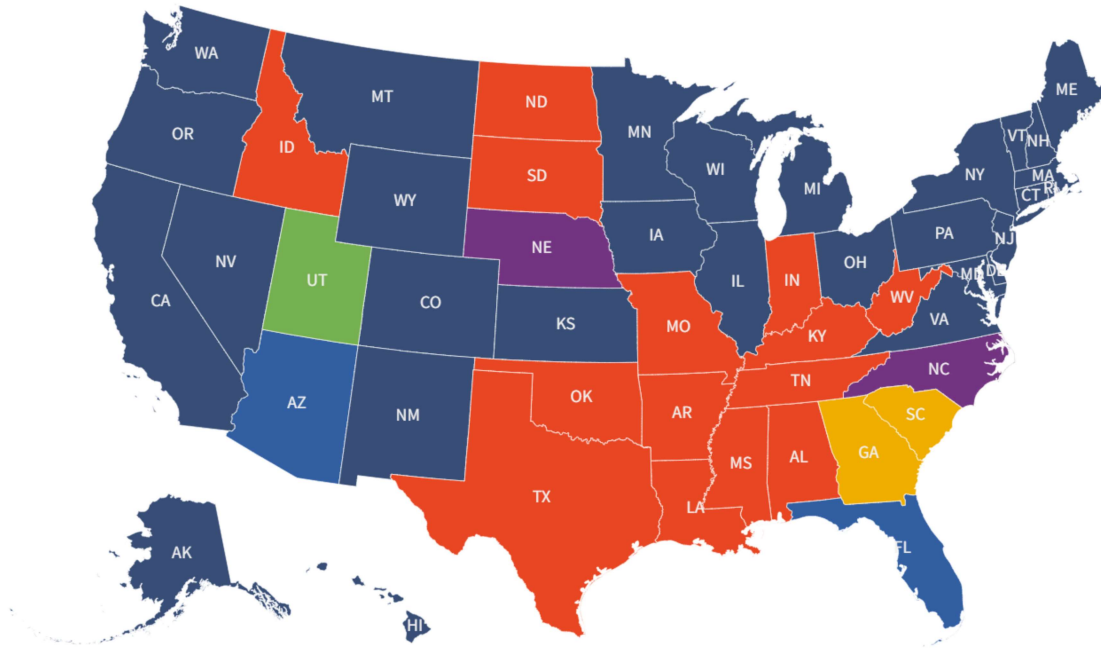
These guys are insulated from the general public. They've been drawn into safe districts where the only electoral threat they face is from an even more right-wing primary opponent."

— **Ruth Conniff**, editor-in-chief, [Wisconsin Examiner](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news across the country*

- A Nebraska Democratic Party committee formally withdrew support for a senator who voted for the law merging a 12-week abortion ban with restrictions on gender-affirming care for minors. ([Nebraska Examiner](#))
- Two dozen Maine advocacy groups endorsed a proposed amendment that would ask voters to codify reproductive rights. ([Maine Morning Star](#))
- Patient navigators are helping people get abortions and secure travel funds. ([KFF Health News](#))
- Six anti-abortion protesters were convicted of blocking access to a Tennessee clinic. ([Associated Press](#))
- Sixty families who had stillborns memorialized their babies. ([ProPublica](#))

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



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