
20-week abortion ban

The facts

20-week abortion bans are bills that would ban all abortions at 20 weeks post fertilization. In May 2015, the House passed a 20 week ban with narrow and cruel exceptions and in September the 2015, that bill was in the hands of the Senate. Fortunately, the legislation did not progress past the Senate, never making it to the President's desk. Still, the stakes remain high as we repeatedly see 20-week bans being reintroduced each legislative session, as well as in the states.

In addition to banning abortions at 20 weeks post fertilization, the 2015 bill carried heavy penalties if a provider violated this law; he or she could have faced criminal penalties of 5 years in prison, a fine, or both. A survivor of rape would be required to report the rape to law enforcement or seek medical care or counseling at least 48 hours prior to the abortion. However, minors who are victims of rape or incest would be required to report the crime to law enforcement or a child protection agency.

Regardless of what exceptions are included in bills like this one, any 20-week ban is an unnecessary attack on a person's ability to decide when to start a family. These bands strip a personal decision away from young people and puts it into the hands of politicians.

Why it matters

States across the country have enacted severe restrictions on abortion access, making it increasingly difficult to schedule an abortion earlier in a pregnancy. In addition to the restrictions that make it difficult to access an abortion, life is complicated and a pregnant person's circumstances can drastically change throughout a pregnancy. It is not the job of politicians to decide whether someone continues a pregnancy or starts a family. In some situations, it can be very emotional when a person needs to seek an abortion later in pregnancy, but it's important that abortion remains available for someone who needs this care.

Young people are less likely to have health insurance and more likely to have jobs that are low paying and less flexible. Because of this, it may take longer to find the time off and collect the funds needed to get an abortion. Young people are already specifically targeted by many abortion restrictions, such as laws that mandate forced parental involvement. A 20-week ban only makes it that much harder for young people to access their constitutionally protected healthcare.



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A 20-week ban on abortion is not about protecting the health of young people. Politicians should focus on passing legislation that helps young people raise healthy families when they are ready.

What you can do

Your members of Congress need to hear from you that 20-week bans are not good for our communities.

Regardless of whether your representative or senator is a champion of abortion access, ask them to vote NO on these bills and stand up to politicians interfering in our personal healthcare decisions.

To find your Representative visit: <http://www.house.gov/>

To find your Senators visit: www.senate.gov

Follow URGE on social media for important updates on 20-week bans.

Resources:

Learn more from the [Guttmacher Institute](http://www.guttmacher.org) about states that have already passed bills restricting access to abortion after 20 weeks.



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