

April 2021



The Right to Vote Is a Reproductive Health, Rights, & Justice Issue

Dear State Legislator:

We, the undersigned organizations, state legislators, and leaders in the reproductive health, rights, and justice movement, join together to call out the racist and anti-democratic attacks on voting rights and access happening in state legislatures across the United States.

Conservative state legislators have ramped up their efforts to make it harder to vote. Voter restrictions have long been part of the conservative platform; however, their attempts to push anti-democracy bills have recently spiked, in response to record voter turnout, revealing they will stop at nothing to disenfranchise Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC). In the 2021 state legislative session alone, 253 anti-voter bills have been introduced in 43 states with this number expected to grow. The bills institute new barriers to voting and target people of color and by reducing hours of polling locations, cutting back on early voting options, requiring new, unnecessary identification requirements and curtailing or eliminating absentee voting.

Conservatives are trying to destroy our democracy. The 2020 Presidential election put the issue of voting rights and access front-and-center. As conservatives tried to restrict access to polling stations, mail in ballots, and contested ballot validity, progressive groups and legislators--often aligning with principles of reproductive health, rights, and justice--sought to ensure the United States democracy stood firm, recognizing that the overwhelming majority of votes that were in question were largely Black and Brown voters.

The reproductive health, rights, and justice movement cannot stay silent in this moment. We know that reproductive freedom and voting rights and access are intrinsically linked. Equitable access to the vote means better representation of our communities and responsiveness to our basic needs like comprehensive healthcare, including contraception, maternal care, abortion care, and comprehensive sex education. Moreover, equitable access to the ballot box allows us to focus on justice and liberation, which increases bodily autonomy and integrity for many marginalized communities especially Black and Brown people, young people, and queer, transgender, and nonbinary people.

Voting is the powerful weapon communities across this country have when it comes to protecting rights to control our bodies. Barriers to restrict voting access are systematically used to target the same people who would be most affected by anti-abortion laws and attacks on

sexual and reproductive health care — Black and Brown communities, immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, and young people.

Make no mistake: these voting restrictions are intended to target the same Black and Brown communities that turned out in record numbers throughout the United States, especially in the South and Midwest. Anti-abortion legislators in Georgia, for example, passed a measure to strip away Georgia's Secretary of State election oversight in favor of increased conservative, legislative oversight. It also creates new barriers to voting by adding new voter ID requirements for absentee ballots, permanently reduces access to ballot drop boxes, and criminalizes the practice of "line warming," in which volunteers hand out food and water to voters standing in long lines, among others. These actions are designed to disproportionately impact BIPOC voters.

In 2020, Black women-led organizations mobilized communities for equitable access to the ballot box by enacting many of the same tactics conservatives are now attempting to attack. It is no surprise that Black women, queer, transgender, and nonbinary people also experience some of the greatest attacks to abortion access in the South.

But the reproductive health, rights, and justice movement will continue fighting to ensure bodily autonomy is protected for marginalized communities, and that includes the right to vote.

Sincerely,
State Innovation Exchange (SiX)
URGE: Unite for Reproductive and Gender
Equity

State Legislators

Alaska Representative Geran Tarr
Arizona Representative Raquel A. Terán
Arizona Representative Athena Salman
Arizona Senator Juan Mendez
California Assemblymember David Chiu
Colorado Representative Susan Lontine
Colorado Representative Brianna Titone
Colorado Senator Julie Gonzales
Colorado Senator Brittany Pettersen
Colorado Representative Leslie Herod
Connecticut Representative Jillian Gilchrest
Connecticut Representative Kate Farrar
Delaware Senator Elizabeth Lockman
Delaware Representative Larry Lambert
Georgia Representative Park Cannon
Illinois Representative Will Guzzardi
Iowa Representative Liz Bennett
Kentucky Representative Attica Scott
Kansas Senator Mary Ware

Louisiana Representative Aimee Adatto
Freeman
Maine Representative Charlotte Warren
Maine Representative Amy Roeder
Maine Representative Vicki Doudera
Michigan Senator Erika Geiss
Minnesota Senator Scott Dibble
New Hampshire Representative Lee Walker
Oxenham
North Carolina Representative Julie von
Haefen
Pennsylvania Representative Joe
Hohenstein
Pennsylvania Representative Chris Rabb
Pennsylvania Senator Katie Muth
Pennsylvania Representative Mary Jo Daley
Pennsylvania Representative Dan Frankel
Virginia Delegate Kaye Kory
Wisconsin Representative Lisa Subeck

Wisconsin Representative Jonathan Brostoff

Wisconsin Senator Jeff Smith

National and State Organizations

A Woman's Choice of Greensboro
A Woman's Choice of Charlotte
A Woman's Choice of Raleigh
A Woman's Choice of Jacksonville
Abortion Care Network
Advocates for Youth
All-Options
All* Above All Action Fund
American Association of University Women
American Atheists
AMPLIFY Georgia
Arizona Center for Women's Advancement (ACWA)
Asian Pacific Community in Action
Athlete Ally
Avow
AZ AANHPI for Equity
Black Feminist Future
Bolder Learning
Camelback Family Planning
Catholics for Choice
Center for Biological Diversity
CHANGE (Center for Health and Gender Equity)
Civil Liberties and Public Policy
Clean Elections Texas
Cobalt Advocates
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity & Reproductive Rights (COLOR)
Columbia-NOW
Converge
Desert Star Family Planning
Feminist Women's Health Center
FL NOW
Florida National Organization of Women
Gender Justice
Global Justice Center
Guttmacher Institute
HIVE @ UCSF

Hope Clinic for Women
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice at the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Interfaith Voices for Reproductive Justice (IVRJ)
International Women's Health Coalition
Ipas
Jane's Due Process
Keep Abortion Safe
Kentucky Reproductive Freedom Fund
Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice Virginia
Latina Institute New York
Lawyering Project
Legal Voice
Louisiana Coalition for Reproductive Freedom
Medical Students for Choice
Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH)
Mutual Aid Midlands
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut
NARAL Pro-Choice Georgia
NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland
NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts
NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri
NARAL Pro-Choice Nevada
NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina
NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Council of Jewish Women

National Council of Jewish Women Arizona
National Health Law Program
National Institute for Reproductive Health
National Latina Institute for Reproductive
Justice
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Law Center Action Fund
National Women's Health Network
NEO Philanthropy
New Orleans Abortion Fund
New Voices for Reproductive Justice
Our Bodies Ourselves
Our Justice
Patient Forward
People For the American Way
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Plan C
Planned Parenthood Action Fund
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona
Population Institute
Positive Women's Network-USA
Preterm
Pro-Choice Arizona / Abortion Fund of
Arizona
Progress Florida
Progress Now Colorado
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Reproductive Health Access Project
Retired Public Health Social Worker
SC AFL-CIO
Secular Coalition for AZ

SHIFT NC
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change
SisterSong: National Women of Color
Reproductive Justice Collective
SPARK Reproductive Justice NOW!, Inc.
Speaking of Birth
State Innovation Exchange
Step Forward Strategies
SY Consulting
Teen Health Mississippi
The Feminist Wire
The Ford & Ford Group
The TRIAD Trust
The Women's Centers
The Womxn Project
Thembi Anaiya LLC
UltraViolet
UnRestrict Minnesota
URGE: Unite for Reproductive and Gender
Equity
We Are Family
We Testify
Whole Woman's Health Alliance
Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health
WOCSHN (Women of Color Sexual Health
Network)
Women's Rights and Empowerment
Network
Woodhull Freedom Foundation
WV FREE
WV FREE Action Fund