



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

CITY COUNCIL/HOUSING AUTHORITY/SUCCESSOR AGENCY/FINANCING AUTHORITY BUSINESS/COMMITTEE REPORTS AGENDA ITEM NO. H.1

DATE: July 5, 2022

TO: City Council

FROM: Stephen Fischer, City Attorney, (805) 385-7483, stephen.fischer@oxnard.org

SUBJECT: Resolution Supporting Reproductive Rights.

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council adopt a resolution declaring:

1. The City of Oxnard's commitment to women's rights and reproductive freedom;
2. The City of Oxnard as a Right-To-Choose sanctuary city; and
3. Support for the codification of the right to an abortion into Federal and California Constitutional law.

BACKGROUND

On May 17, 2022, Councilmember Lopez proposed the City Council consider a resolution declaring the City's support for women's rights and reproductive freedom. Councilmember Lopez's proposal was motivated by a leaked draft opinion of the U.S. Supreme Court on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Clinic*. The opinion revealed the Court's intent to overturn the longstanding decision of *Roe v. Wade*, which granted women a Constitutional right to an abortion.

DISCUSSION

Decided in 1973, *Roe v. Wade* established a women's right to an abortion as a Constitutional right of privacy under the 14th Amendment. The ruling was subsequently upheld in the 1992 case of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. If *Roe* is overturned, roughly 22 states are set to restrict access to abortion, preventing approximately 100,000 women from accessing abortions within the first year. Restricting access to abortion does not reduce the demand for abortions as one in four women will have an abortion in their reproductive lifetimes. If *Roe* is struck down, California will become a destination for many women seeking care that may be illegal in their home cities and states.

It is estimated that 49% of abortion patients live at or below the poverty level, while 59% of abortion patients already have children and 55% are experiencing at least one disruptive life event. Moreover, according to a 2020 study, women denied abortions are more likely to fall into debt, file for bankruptcy, and use social services. Marginalized groups, particularly low-income women and women of color, will be the most impacted if *Roe* is overturned, causing greater societal inequity. Access to reproductive healthcare, including access to abortion, is therefore essential to the personal autonomy, health, and equality of women.

In early May of this year, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Women's Health Protection Act, which would have codified a women's right to terminate her pregnancy. However, the Act did not pass the U.S. Senate. More recently, on June 8th, SCA 10—granting a constitutional right to an abortion and contraceptives—was introduced in the California State Senate. If SCA 10 passes both the Senate and Assembly before June 30th, it will be placed on the November ballot for a vote of the people.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This agenda item is a routine operational item or does not relate to the five strategic priorities adopted by City Council on March 16, 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

COMMITTEE OUTCOME

This item did not originate in Committee.

Prepared by: Chelsey Ballot, Deputy City Attorney

ATTACHMENTS

1. Oxnard Reso re Reproductive Rights_6.2022