

Statement on Roe v. Wade

The Supreme Court's impending *Dobbs v. Jackson* decision could have a devastating impact on our nation's medical practice, medical training, and most importantly the health and safety of our nation's citizens. Ending the constitutional right to an abortion threatens the rights of pregnant people to control their bodies and their lives. Disparities in maternal health will worsen for the most vulnerable people in our society. Maternal mortality will increase by 21%, and as high as 33% for Black women.ⁱ It is certain, some will die.ⁱⁱ

Striking down *Roe v. Wade* would affect not only abortion access but also maternal care as well as fertility treatments. Pregnancy changes a person's physiology. These changes can worsen existing diseases and medical conditions. Denying access to abortion can adversely affect a patient's mental health, safety, and economic well-being including delaying separation from a violent partner and an increased likelihood of falling into povertyⁱⁱⁱ

A person who has suffered the violation and trauma of rape could be forced to continue a pregnancy.

It's clear that restrictions and barriers to abortion disproportionately harm those who have limited resources and face barriers to medical care, including low-income and financially disadvantaged people, residents in rural areas, and Black, Indigenous, and minoritized populations. When access to abortion is restricted, people are forced to travel, sometimes thousands of miles. The cost and time associated with that access puts it out of reach for those who need it most. Ultimately, denying access to abortions, combined with higher maternal mortality rates and worsening health outcomes greatly increases those disparities for already disadvantaged people.

Our department and our institution oppose any attack on reproductive rights and are committed to maintaining access to all reproductive healthcare, including abortion. As a mission-driven healthcare system that maintained abortion access throughout the COVID pandemic, we are proud of our legislature and governor's efforts to maintain and improve access to patient-centered, high-quality abortion care in New York State.

The American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Nurse Midwives, and many others endorse abortions as a safe, common and essential part of health care and reproductive medicine.

Ultimately, many people make the decision not to be pregnant and should have the autonomy to control their own destiny. As medical professionals, we have a duty to provide our patients with the treatment they need to be safe and healthy. We call on the Supreme Court to abandon their draft decision and uphold *Roe v. Wade* to protect abortion access across the United States.

ⁱ Stevenson AJ; The Pregnancy-Related Mortality Impact of a Total Abortion Ban in the United States: A Research Note on Increased Deaths Due to Remaining Pregnant. *Demography* 1 December 2021; 58 (6): 2019–2028

ⁱⁱ Lancet, T. (2022). Why *Roe v. Wade* must be defended. *Lancet (London, England)*, 399(10338), 1845.

ⁱⁱⁱ Foster, D. G. (2020). *The turnaway study: ten years, a thousand women, and the consequences of having—or being denied—an abortion*. Simon and Schuster.