

Do Something: Social Justice and Advocacy Proposal **Jewish Abortion Access**

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PSYC354





The First Amendment

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified on December 15, 1791.

The First Amendment protects certain civil rights and liberties: freedom of speech, religion, the press, peaceful protest, and the right to petition the government.

It prevents the government from making laws that:

- establish a national religion
- impede the free exercise of religion
- abridge the freedom of speech
- infringe upon the freedom of the press
- interfere with the right to peaceful assembly



Roe v Wade

On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court issued its landmark 7–2 decision in *Roe v. Wade*, protecting a woman's constitutional right to choose what to do with their bodies.

Roe v Wade was overturned on June 24, 2022, because the US Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution does not “explicitly” protect the right to an abortion, leaving it up to the states whether protections will be in place and to what extent.



Jewish Culture/Practice

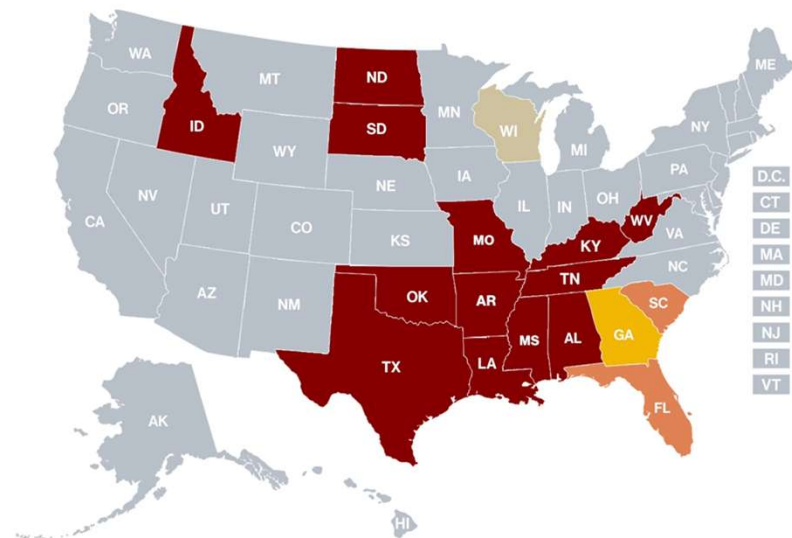
The Jewish community has been discriminated against for many years, including the obvious tragedy known as the Holocaust, but what I am focusing on takes place in the US more recently and to a lesser extent. Roe v Wade being overturned not only means less autonomy for women, but it can also be argued that it is against the right of freedom of religion. According to Judaism, the mother's life and wellbeing is to be prioritized, not that of a fetus, so limiting abortion access goes against an important value in the Jewish community. In the Torah, damage to a fetus is punished less severely than damage to a human woman, signifying that a fetus is not considered to be a human being (Joffe, 2022). Abortion bans limit religious freedom, which goes against the 1st amendment and the ideals of this nation, and being active systemic discrimination against Jewish Americans.

Abortion Rights Restricted

The Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade on June 24, 2022 in the case Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. This ended the constitutional right to abortion nationwide, and now there are discrepancies in which states protect abortion rights.

States that Have Restricted Abortion Rights Since Roe v. Wade was Overturned

■ Near-total or total ban in place ■ 6-week bans not yet in effect* ■ 6-week bans in place
■ Abortion providers have suspended services due to law confusion



*Florida: a 6-week ban was signed into law but only goes into effect if the state Supreme Court upholds a 15 week ban. It would go into effect 30 days after that.



Real World Impact

States with abortion restrictions have significantly higher rates of maternal mortality than those with abortion access. In 2020, the maternal death rate in abortion-restriction states was 28.8 per 100,000 births, compared to 17.8 in abortion-access states (a 62% increase). The rate of maternal mortality is rising nearly twice as fast in states with restrictions. Racial disparities are also evident, as non-Hispanic Black people seem to be experiencing 20% higher rates, non-Hispanic white individuals 33% higher, and Hispanic individuals 31% higher in abortion-restriction states compared to those in states with abortion access (*The U.S. Maternal Health Divide: The Limited Maternal Health Services and Worse Outcomes of States Proposing New Abortion Restrictions*, 2022). At first glance it may seem like a good thing that those in marginalized ethnic groups have a smaller rate increase- but unfortunately this is due to the already high maternal mortality rates among those populations, therefore making the rate increase appear lesser than the white maternal mortality rate. There is a growing population of jewish people of color in America, so pretending these stats don't impact jewish americans is harmful to the very real existence of multicultural jewish individuals and jewish people of color. It isn't a monolithic identity, and what effects some of a community will damage the whole of it.



Action Plan

I am going to create a powerpoint presentation outlining where to access abortion care in the state, and which places have accommodating locations/hours so that they are accessible for Jewish people practicing shabbat or various holidays during when care is necessary. It will be presented at events in various jewish organizations on campuses in different states across the US, so it is even more helpful in locations where there are less protections for abortion care.



Organizations Involved

I would collaborate with Hillel/Chabad/MEOR on campus to create and show this presentation at a multitude of Jewish events. There is usually at least one of these organizations on college campuses, even when there is a small Jewish population.





Empirical Psychological Evidence

This would be successful in informing people due to in group bias, as people have more care and listen to topics that affect their own group (Chae, 2022). By utilizing jewish groups on campus, I am using in group favoritism to my advantage to spread knowledge and benefit those who are concerned by the recent overturning of Roe v Wade and resulting bans across the country.



Sustainability

I wouldn't be able to make only one comprehensive powerpoint for every state, because that's just not realistic, so there would have to be people within these organizations in different locations contributing. They would have to not only put the relevant information for their area, but also update the information when necessary. There are different restrictions and laws for every state, so this will have to be sustainable beyond me in general, not just after my involvement stops.



Expected Impact

This plan will spread the word of where and how to get access to life saving care, and in a way that is inclusive to a community being greatly affected by the lack of resources available. In addition, non jewish people will attend some of these events, and those ignorant to how jewish people are impacted by abortion bans will gain valuable education on the matter. There might be the issue of those against abortion not seeing these presentations as important, but this would be minimal due to the natural empathy during such events. Overall, the impact will mean more awareness and valuable knowledge spread by and to the jewish community- and communities also negatively impacted by abortion bans and etc.



Empirical Support

Being shown a presentation on how a community is impacted systemically BY those impacted, amidst a room of people also connected to the issue at hand, will increase empathy. With empathy comes more positive reactions to the topic of abortion, so even those hesitant will come away with some semblance of awareness and understanding (Cheng, 2024).



Evaluation Plan

I would evaluate the impact by doing a survey before and after the presentation events asking what participants/viewers learned from it and if they plan on taking any steps to educate others. Honestly, first or second hand accounts of people describing their experiences and if the information provided helped anybody get care would be the most helpful in evaluating how this action plan is positively providing for people.

References

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