



May 31, 2019

Dear Fellow Governor,

Over the last several years, we've been battling an escalating attack on the freedom of women and families to determine their futures. And in the past few weeks, states across the country have enacted new and extreme restrictions on abortion, attacking safe and legal health care and putting women's lives at risk.

Reproductive choice — the right to make private decisions about one's body, the right to determine whether and when to have children, the right to make medical decisions without political intrusion in the doctor's office — is fundamental to a woman's autonomy and ensuring that all women, including LGBTQI individuals, have an equal role in our society and our economy. And the violation of that choice — the government forcing a woman to carry a pregnancy against her wishes and against her judgment of her own well-being and self-interest — is a fundamental violation of individual liberty and freedom.

The common goal among these bans and restrictions is clear: to violate a woman's constitutional right to safe and legal abortion, contrary to 40 years of precedent.

In the absence of federal leadership on this issue, states must step up and put in place their own protections — both in statute and in their state constitutions, and through the expansion of family planning and education — to defend every American's right to reproductive freedom.

In California, the fundamental right to choose to bear a child or to choose to obtain an abortion is the official public policy of the State, protected in both our constitution and by statute. And today, we issued a California Proclamation on Reproductive Freedom, reaffirming our commitment to protecting women's reproductive choices, educating Californians about their rights to reproductive freedom, welcoming women to California to fully exercise their reproductive rights, and acting as a model for other states that want to ensure full reproductive freedom for women.

In Washington, we have a long history recognizing the rights and freedoms of all women and individuals seeking to determine their own destiny. Abortion has been legal in Washington for nearly 50 years. In 1991, we were the first state to pass a voter-approved initiative guaranteeing the right to abortion for Washington women, and since then we've passed numerous laws and policies that emphasize autonomy, access, and science, including our landmark Reproductive Parity Act ensuring equal access to reproductive healthcare and other forms of medical care. We only allow medically-accurate sex education in our schools, we promote access to all forms of contraception in all corners of our state, and we ensure that all women, regardless of

their financial means, have access to safe and legal abortion. We are proud to stand for and with women's rights and all human rights to self-determination and opportunity.

In Oregon, we passed one of the strongest reproductive health care bills in the nation in 2017 – the Reproductive Health Equity Act (RHEA). This first-of-its-kind law expanded access to reproductive services to Oregonians across the state, regardless of income, citizenship status or gender. The RHEA requires private health plans to cover, among other things, well-woman care; certain reproductive health care screenings; pregnancy screenings; contraceptive drugs, devices and products; and abortions. The law was challenged on the ballot, but Oregonians across the state overwhelmingly defeated the effort to repeal the law, upholding Oregon's long history of protecting reproductive freedom.

Together, we are asking other states to review their laws and enact similar protections, programs, and policies to safeguard a woman's right to choose. Roe is settled law, but newly enacted and clearly unconstitutional laws in a handful of states compel our states to act now to reaffirm longstanding commitments to safeguard the fundamental rights of women.

Even as states around the country enact extreme laws that violate women's rights and undermine access to safe and legal healthcare, we will uphold women's equality and liberty by protecting their reproductive freedom. Join us.

Signed,

A black ink signature of Gavin Newsom, consisting of several bold, sweeping strokes.

Governor Gavin Newsom
State of California

A blue ink signature of Kate Brown, written in a cursive style.

Governor Kate Brown
State of Oregon

A black ink signature of Jay Inslee, featuring a large, stylized 'J' and 'I'.

Governor Jay Inslee
State of Washington