



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0544-2015, **Version:** *

Preconsidered Res. No. 544

Resolution calling upon the United States Congress to pass legislation to protect a woman's health, her right to determine whether and when to bear a child, and her ability to exercise that right by limiting government interference with the provision of abortion services and ensuring legal, safe abortion care is available to any woman who needs it.

By Council Members Cumbo, Crowley, Johnson, Kallos, Garodnick, Chin, Lander, Levine and Mendez

Whereas, In 1973, the United States Supreme Court legalized abortion throughout the country with the Roe v. Wade decision; and

Whereas, Central to the decision is the premise that the right to make childbearing choices is fundamental to women's lives and their ability to participate fully and equally in society; and

Whereas, Since 1973, many states have passed measures with the intentions of whittling away at this right; and

Whereas, According to the Guttmacher Institute, in just the last four years, states have enacted 231 abortion restrictions; and

Whereas, Many of these restrictions create numerous delays and hardships for women such as denial of access to early abortion procedures, increased risks to health and increased expenses as well as burdensome logistical planning; and

Whereas, Often times these burdens fall more heavily on low-income women, women of color, young women and women living in rural areas; and

Whereas, According to July 2014 testimony provided by Nancy Northup, the CEO of the Center for Reproductive Rights, "... the only thing holding back the further spread of these very real threats to women's health and lives are court orders blocking these laws from taking effect;" and

Whereas, In order to address many of these concerns the Women’s Health Protection Act (WHPA) was introduced, and later died, in the last Congressional session; and

Whereas, The WHPA would protect a woman’s right to safe and legal abortion by limiting restrictions on the provision of abortion services ; and

Whereas, The WHPA’s findings state that “Congress has the authority to protect women’s ability to access abortion services pursuant to its powers under the Commerce Clause and its powers under section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution to enforce the provisions of section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment”; and

Whereas, It is essential that this legislation be re-introduced and passed in this current session of Congress because 42 years after the Roe v. Wade decision there is a renewed threat to women’s access to safe and affordable abortions; and

Whereas, Reproductive health care is an important component of women’s overall health, and reproductive freedom is equally important to women’s safety and well-being; and

Whereas, Despite Roe v. Wade being the law of the land, many states have drastically restricted women’s ability to access necessary and timely reproductive health care and limited doctors’ ability to provide such care; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to pass legislation to protect a woman’s health, her right to determine whether and when to bear a child, and her ability to exercise that right by limiting government interference with the provision of abortion services and ensuring legal, safe abortion care is available to any woman who needs it.

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