
Preliminary - Messages – LA 6-Week Ban

DO call it an **abortion ban** or a **ban on abortion early in pregnancy**

DO NOT call it a **heartbeat ban**

At six weeks, most women don't even know they're pregnant.

For those Louisianans, this law will be an outright ban on abortion. If enacted, it will be one of the most extreme abortion restrictions in the country.

Louisiana is already an abortion desert.

Abortion is already exceedingly difficult to access in Louisiana since there are only three clinics, and countless hurdles someone must face before getting an abortion.

Restriction examples:

- o *Mandatory, biased counseling designed to deter women from having an abortion*
- o *A 24-hour waiting period after counseling, meaning two trips to the clinic and hotel costs for those traveling long distances. This hits low-income women with children particularly hard, because not only can they not afford the travel expenses and missing work, but they also have to pay for childcare while they're gone as well.*
- o *Minors must get consent from their parent or obtain a judicial bypass*
- o *Abortion isn't covered for people on Medicaid*
- o *Doctors can't prescribe abortion pills via telemedicine*

Abortion bans do not reduce the number of abortions.

Overwhelming evidence shows that restrictions like this do not dissuade those who have made the decision to end a pregnancy from doing so. They force people to seek abortion illegally or drive hundreds of miles to another state. For some women, being denied abortion care means that they will be forced to carry a pregnancy to term.

The ban will cause more poverty in Louisiana

State legislators are trying to force their will on low-income women, and they're succeeding because these women will be unable to pay to get an abortion out of state. And studiesⁱ have shown, when a woman is denied her right to an abortion, she will spend more years in poverty than a woman, who is allowed her constitutional right.

Instead of focusing their efforts on helping women get out of poverty, the legislature is intent on making conditions worse for women.

This ban directly defies Supreme Court precedent.

*The Supreme Court has consistently held that states cannot deny women the ultimate decision to terminate a pregnancy prior to viability—first held in *Roe v. Wade* and again in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. (Note: similar pre-viability bans have been blocked in Arkansas, Arizona, Iowa, North Dakota, Mississippi, and Kentucky.)*

Louisiana will stop at nothing to deny women the right to abortion.

This unconstitutional ban is just one of the ways Louisiana is trying to restrict access to reproductive health care. Louisiana is currently defending six separate lawsuits challenging its shameful efforts to shut down clinics and prevent new ones from opening. We will keep taking them to court until they get the message.

In a cash-strapped state like Louisiana, it makes no sense to spending money on court cases which they are destined to lose.

Based on public records we've been able to obtain, the State has spent, or already committed to spend, \$1.5 million on these cases, and those costs will continue to mount as the lawsuits move forward. This amount also does not account for the true cost to the State in terms of the time and resources of State officials, and the six pending cases will already require the continued investment of government resources and taxpayer money for years to come.

We are seeing 6-week bans across the country.

*Fourteen other state legislatures have introduced 6-weeks bans this session, including Georgia, Maryland, Maine, Minnesota, Florida, Kentucky, Ohio, South Carolina, Missouri, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, and West Virginia. This is all part of a coordinated, national strategy to push legal abortion out of reach even while *Roe v. Wade* stands.*

ⁱ Diana Greene Foster, M. Antonia Biggs, Lauren Ralph, Caitlin Gerds, Sarah Roberts, M. Maria Glymour, "Socioeconomic Outcomes of Women Who Receive and Women Who Are Denied Wanted Abortions in the United States", *American Journal of Public Health* 108, no. 3 (March 1, 2018): pp. 407-413. Available at: <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.2017.304247>