



May 16th, 2023

Governor Phil Murphy
Senate President Nicholas Scutari
Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin

Dear Governor Murphy, Senate President Scutari and Assembly Speaker Coughlin:

We the undersigned members of the Thrive NJ coalition, alongside state and national partners, allies and advocates are urging you to take immediate action in light of the recent anti-abortion extremist attacks to time-sensitive medication abortion care.

The Texas case, *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA*, which seeks to rescind the U.S. Food and Drug Administrations' (FDA) approval of mifepristone, a medication used safely for over 20 years for medication abortion and miscarriage care, was brought by extreme anti-abortion groups to a hand-selected, radical, Trump-appointed judge, leading to an egregious and unfounded decision that could reduce access to mifepristone across the country – including in states where abortion remains legal like New Jersey. While the full legal implications of these decisions still remain to be seen as the cases continue to move through the courts, what we do know is that any attempt to ban or further restrict access to abortion will fall hardest on the communities most harmed by systemic barriers to health care – that includes people of color, immigrants, people with low-incomes, youth, and people living in rural areas.

This case will likely be eventually heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, but, let's be clear, it is not about science or patient safety. Rather, it is another attempt by anti-abortion extremists to further restrict and outright ban abortion care nationwide. While this attempt to erode the patient-provider relationship is egregious, this decision also sets a precedent that significantly disrupts ALL pharmaceutical research, threatening the autonomy of the FDA's authority over ALL medication approvals, including vaccines. Given New Jersey's standing as the nation's "medicine cabinet" this is especially concerning.

Depending on how this case is ultimately resolved, already overwhelmed abortion clinics may need to dramatically shift their current protocols and patients will have to find additional resources to overcome barriers to care. This latest attack comes at a time when providers are already stretched to near-capacity given the influx of out-of-state patients coming to New Jersey for care. Every New Jerseyan deserves to live a safe life where they can make their own reproductive health care choices to access the care they need without fear, shame, or institutional obstacles.

To mitigate disruptions in abortion access, and remove barriers that continue to push abortion care out of reach for too many people, we urge leadership to take the following immediate actions:

- **Allocate state funds to support abortion providers and expand coverage for reproductive health care services:**
 - Continue to support existing abortion providers in the areas of staffing, training, abortion-related infrastructure, and security.
 - Include abortion care within the reproductive health care services covered through the FY24 Budget for communities who are ineligible for health insurance due to their immigration status.

- **Take immediate legislative and regulatory action to remove ongoing barriers to reproductive health care and expand abortion access:**
 - Pass the **Reproductive Equity Act** (S2918/A4350) to address financial and coverage barriers to abortion care
 - Direct the Department of Banking and Insurance (DOBI) to take regulatory action to mandate that all state regulated health insurance policies provide coverage for abortion care with no out-of-pocket costs for the patient.

- **Deploy public education and community outreach efforts related to New Jersey's reproductive rights and available health care services**
 - Enact legislation to establish a state website with information related to New Jersey's reproductive rights, health coverage options, and information on reproductive health care providers (S3275/A4829)
 - Increase public awareness for existing reproductive services by investing in widespread, multilingual public education and community outreach efforts related to reproductive rights, health and services.

With oral arguments on the Texas case set to begin before the Fifth Circuit Court on May 17, and with the one-year anniversary of the disastrous *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision almost upon us, we urge our lawmakers to meet this moment with immediate action. It is clear grassroots and advocacy groups are willing to show up time and time again, and in the wake of this new threat, we will continue to increasingly strengthen the public call and make our voices heard until access for all is ensured through legislative, budgetary, and administrative change.

In this alarmingly critical moment, those of us on the frontlines of this fight call on Governor Murphy, and the New Jersey Legislature to once again act swiftly and meaningfully to expand abortion access for all in New Jersey.

Sincerely,

Action Together New Jersey
 Advocates for Youth
 All* Above All
 American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey (ACLU-NJ)
 American Friends Service Committee Prison Watch
 American Society for Emergency Contraception
 Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice
 Bend the Arc Jewish Action: South Jersey
 Bergen Indivisible

BlueWaveNJ
Casa Freehold
Catholics for Choice
Cherry Hill Women's Center
Doctors For Fertility NFP
Fair Share Housing Center
Gloucester County NAACP
HiTOPS
IRMS - The Institute For Reproductive Medicine and Science
Jolt Inc
Krista Gervon Doula Care
La Casa Dominicana NJ
Latina Civic Action
Latino Action Network Foundation
League of Women Voters of New Jersey
Leonia Action Alliance
Make the Road NJ
Manavi
MomsRising
Morris County NJ NOW
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Abortion Federation
National Association of Social Workers - NJ Chapter
National Center for Advocacy and Recovery, Inc.
National Council of Jewish Women Bergen County Section
National Council of Jewish Women Essex County Section
National Health Law Program
National Institute for Reproductive Health
National Women's Law Center
NCJW Jersey Hills Section
NCJW West Morris Section
New Jersey Abortion Access Fund
New Jersey Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM)
New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice
New Jersey Citizen Action
New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault
New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence
New Jersey Family Planning League
New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice
New Jersey Policy Perspective (NJPP)
New Jersey Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-NJ)
New Jersey State Society of Physician Assistants
New Jersey Tenants Organization
Newark Communities for Accountable Policing
NJ 11th For Change
North Jersey Practical Support
North Jersey Sierra Group

Northern New Jersey NOW (National Organization for Women)
NOW-NJ
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Pilgrim Medical Center
Reproductive Health Access Project, New Jersey Chapter
S.O.F.I.A.
SHORE AREA NOW
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change
SOMA Action
South Jersey NOW--Alice Paul Chapter
Speaking of Birth
Stanton Strong Inc.
State Innovation Exchange (SiX) Action
Teaneck Women Together
The Abortion Justice Committee of New Jersey
The Children's Home Society of New Jersey
Unidad Latina en Accion NJ
UU Faith Action NJ
WEDO of Bergen County
Women for Progress
Women Who Never Give Up
Women's Rights Information Center
YWCA Northern New Jersey