

February 1, 2022

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the undersigned medical organizations, representing physicians dedicated to advancing the health of our patients, we urge you to support the *Women's Health Protection Act* (S. 1975). The purpose of this legislation—to protect the patient-physician relationship and preserve the ability of physicians to provide evidence-based care to their patients—is critically important and incredibly urgent.

Federal, state, and local lawmakers have long played an important role in our health care system. The myriad policies aimed at addressing the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency provide a prime example of legislators acting to improve the health of their constituents. However, physician leaders have long raised concerns, including in a *New England Journal of Medicine* commentary nearly a decade ago, about the alarming increase in legislators “overstepping the proper limits of their role in the health care of Americans to dictate the nature and content of patients’ interactions with their physicians.”ⁱ This overreach has taken many forms, including creating unnecessary obstacles for patients trying to access medically appropriate care, forcing physicians to practice outside the bounds of evidence-based medicine, and criminalizing physicians for providing compassionate and evidence-based care. The communities most impacted by these barriers are those already experiencing grave inequities in the health care system. We have reached a crisis level where our long-held fears are now becoming a reality and evidence-based care has been rendered completely inaccessible in the second largest state in our nation, with other states likely to follow suit in the near future. The *Women's Health Protection Act* would address an area of medicine systematically targeted with government overregulation—reproductive health care—by prohibiting these inappropriate restrictions and restoring the ability of patients to receive comprehensive care, free from legislative intrusion.

As physicians spanning the spectrum of care, thank you for your urgent consideration of this important legislation to prevent legislative interference in the practice of medicine and protect the patient-physician relationship.

Sincerely,

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
AAGL
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Pediatrics
American College of Correctional Physicians
American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American Gynecological & Obstetrical Society
American Medical Student Association
American Medical Women's Association
American Psychiatric Association

American Society of Hematology
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Urogynecologic Society
Council of University Chairs of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Infectious Diseases Society for Obstetrics & Gynecology
National Medical Association
North American Society of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology
Society of Academic Specialists in General Obstetrics and Gynecology
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Society of Family Planning
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society of OB/GYN Hospitalists
Society for Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility
Student Osteopathic Medical Association
Womxn's Health Collaborative

ⁱ Weinberger SE, Lawrence HC 3rd, Henley DE, Alden ER, Hoyt DB. Legislative interference with the patient-physician relationship. *N Engl J Med.* 2012 Oct 18;367(16):1557-9. doi: 10.1056/NEJMsbl209858. PMID: 23075183.