



Protect Access to Abortion in Montana

This Week at the Montana Legislature February 14, 2021

No Holding Back

Things haven't exactly been relaxed during Montana's 67th Legislative Session and from the looks of this week, that's not about to change any time soon. Tomorrow morning at 8am, we'll be testifying against Rep. Caleb Hinkle's [House Bill 337 — an absolutely egregious attack on reproductive health in the Treasure State. The bill's blatant extremism seeks to ban abortion completely by granting your full legal rights as a Montanan to a fertilized egg.](#) That could very well mean a ban on birth control (even for victims of rape and incest!) and IVF. But the week's horrors don't end there. [Sen. Carl Glimm's SB 215 would give individuals, corporations, or other entities the right to discriminate and harm Montanans in the name of religion.](#)

Extremist attempts to attack our reproductive rights and to justify harm against Montanans will not go unchecked. We're not going to hold back and we hope that you won't either.

Take Action

Tell House Judiciary Committee Members to vote No on House Bill 337.

House Bill 337 is an attempt to give a *fertilized egg*, a *zygote*, or a *fetus* all of the same legal rights that you have as a Montanan. That means zero access to safe abortion and potentially even a ban on common forms of birth control such as the pill, IUDs, or emergency contraception — even for victims of rape or incest.

HB 337 has nothing to do with the health of Montanans. It is a blatant extremist attempt at banning abortion altogether. [Tell members of the House Judiciary Committee to vote No on HB 337 and to respect our private health care decisions!](#)

Call your senator and ask them to vote No on House Bills 136, 140, 167, and 171, and No on Senate Bill 99.

House Bills 136, 140, 167, and 171 were all passed in Senate Judiciary Committee last week. Senate Bill 99 is Sen. Smith's attempt to create barriers to sex ed in Montana's schools and to bar abortion providers like Planned Parenthood from offering educational resources.

Call or email your senator and tell them to vote No on each of these attempts to attack sexual and reproductive health in Montana!

Are you interested in writing an LTE for your local newspaper, testifying on a bill, or learning how else to make your voice heard during the 67th Legislative Session? Contact Julia, 406-561-7649 or (julia.maxon@ppmontana.org)!

Bills We're Fighting This Week

[HB 337: Constitutional amendment to define 'person'](#) by Rep. Caleb Hinkle (R), House District 68, would change the definition of 'person' in Montana. *Because the change would define "fertilization or conception" as the beginning of life, it would give a fertilized egg or zygote the same rights that you have as a Montanan. HB 337 could even ban common forms of birth control such as the pill, IUDs, and emergency contraception — even for victims of rape or incest.* As an amendment to our state constitution, it requires a 2/3 majority 'Yes' vote from the legislature as a whole in order to be placed on the ballot for voters to ultimately decide in the next general election. [Tell House Judiciary Committee members to vote No on this extremist attempt to ban abortion in Montana!](#)

SB 215: Religious Freedom Restoration Act by Sen. Carl Glimm (R), Senate District 2, would allow any person, corporation, or other entity to use religion as an excuse to discriminate against and harm others. Examples of this bill's dangerous potential include a religiously-affiliated school firing a teacher for becoming pregnant while not married, an employer justifying racial discrimination, a pharmacy refusing to fill birth control prescriptions, or a school counselor refusing to help a gay student. As members of the Free & Fair Coalition, we are joining with partner organizations to fight this baseless attack that would have an outsized impact on LGBTQ+ Montanans. **Contact your senator and the Senate Judiciary Committee and tell them to vote No on SB 215!**

SB 99: [Requiring parents to opt-in to sexual education in schools, Prohibiting abortion providers from offering education by Sen. Cary Smith \(R\), Senate District 27](#), would prohibit students from receiving any sex ed without written permission from their parents or guardians and would ban the use of educational resources offered by abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood of Montana. Comprehensive sex education covers everything from birth control and abstinence to STD prevention and safe, healthy relationships. Our young people must have every opportunity to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy decisions.

[HB 136: Establish pain-capable unborn child protection act by Rep. Lola Sheldon-Galloway \(R\), House District 22](#), would ban abortions at 20 weeks, regardless of the health of the woman or fetus, and criminalize doctors who provide them. It would also potentially endanger women by letting courts decide whether or not to keep their names private.

HB 140: Requiring the provision of information before performance of an abortion by Rep. Amy Regier (R), House District 6, claims to provide women with more information, but ultimately seeks to shame and dissuade them from exercising their constitutional right to abortion.

HB 167: Referendum to adopt the Montana Born-Alive Infant Protection Act by Rep. Matt Regier (R), House District 4, uses inflammatory language to drive a false narrative and stigmatize abortion in Montana. As a referendum, it puts women's health and privacy up to a vote with the ultimate goal of banning abortion altogether.

HB 171: Adopt the Montana Abortion-Inducing Drug Risk Protocol Act by Rep. Sharon Greef (R), House District 88, would keep Montanans from accessing medication abortion, delaying access to health care and creating barriers to care — especially for those in rural areas.

HB 229: Prohibiting health insurance plans offered through the Health Insurance Exchange from covering abortion services [by Rep. Jane Gillette \(R\), House District 64](#), would mean that people who rely on the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Exchange would not have any options to get coverage for abortion. Banning this coverage from Exchange plans would place safe, legal abortion out of reach for the lowest income families in Montana. *This bill will soon be heard in Senate Judiciary Committee.* ***Stay tuned to our social media channels — [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) — for updates on how to take action!***

Legislation We're Watching

HB 112: Require interscholastic athletes to participate under sex assigned at birth by Rep. John Fuller (R), House District 8, would ban transgender athletes from participating in sports in Montana public schools. *This bill was passed in the House on January 27 and should be moving to Senate Judiciary Committee soon.*

[LC 803: Implement medical ethics and diversity act requested by Sen. Keith Regier \(R\), Senate District 3](#), would make it legal for health care workers to refuse care, for example a receptionist could legally refuse to admit a trans patient to the hospital. The language for this bill has just been made available but has not yet been assigned to a committee. *We'll keep you updated on how you can fight this attempt at state-sanctioned discrimination!*

Questions about these bills or how you can help us fight them? Contact Julia, (julia.maxon@ppmontana.org)!

[Visit our website.](#)

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