

## **ICYMI: SCOTUS Vacancy Puts Abortion Access for Women of Color on the Line**

Justice Anthony Kennedy's retirement means there's an open seat on the Supreme Court, and President Trump has vowed to fill it only with people who meet his Trump Test – biased justices who will overturn *Roe v. Wade*. The right to access abortion safely and legally in this country is on the line, and women of color — who already face significant barriers to health care — are going to bear the brunt of it.

The stakes are too high for vague answers about “precedent” to be acceptable. We need to hold nominees to the Personal Liberty Standard. Nominees must affirmatively declare that they believe the Constitution protects individual liberty and the right of all people to make personal decisions about their bodies or the Senate must reject them – the rights and health of millions of women of color depend on it.

### **Statement from Kelley Robinson, National Organizing Director, Planned Parenthood Federation of America:**

“Women of color’s right to bodily autonomy and quality health care has been consistently under attack. Now, President Trump is poised to make yet another move to control our bodies by stripping away our right to safe, legal abortion. Throughout the history of this country, women of color have marched towards progress and we won’t stop now. We’re going to stand up and demand that the Senate reject any Supreme Court nominee that won’t protect our health and our rights. We won’t allow our daughters and granddaughters to have fewer rights than we do.”

### **Women of color are already less likely to be able to access an abortion.**

- Racism and other systemic barriers have contributed to income inequality that makes Black people and Latinos in the U.S. [more likely](#) to use federally funded insurance, which is barred from covering abortion in almost all cases, to access health care.
- The Indian Health Service (IHS) provides all members of federally recognized Native American tribes and their descendants with health care, and federal policy requires that the IHS provide abortion in select cases. However, the Native American Women’s Health Education Resource Center found that more than [85 percent of IHS facilities were non-compliant](#).
- Politicians at the state level have passed [more than 400 restrictions on abortion](#) since 2011. Patients in these states are already traveling hundreds of miles, crossing state lines, and waiting weeks to get an abortion, if they can access services at all. Black, Hispanic, and Native American women experience poverty at [more than twice the rate](#) of non-Hispanic White women, and may lack the financial resources or job flexibility to make these trips.
- In some states, legislators have used [cultural misinformation to craft restrictions](#) used to target Asian American women’s access to abortion.

***If the Senate does not take action to protect our health and our rights, the balance of the court will turn against the constitutional right to access abortion, turning what is already a de facto ban on abortion for some women of color into a blanket ban for all.***

### **Women of color have less access to contraception, leading to more unintended pregnancies**

- Latina women and non-Hispanic Black women are [less likely to have access to family planning services](#), which can result in significantly lower rates of contraceptive use.
- A lack of health insurance and limited access to contraception can raise the rates of unintended pregnancies.

- Though rates of unintended pregnancies have dropped significantly overall in the last 30 years, women of color are still roughly [twice as likely to experience an unintended pregnancy](#) as White women.
- Women of color [have more abortions](#) than White, non-Hispanic women, according to the Guttmacher Institute.

### **The Stereotypes Are Wrong — Women of Color Support *Roe***

According to a [survey conducted by research firm GfK \(Growth from Knowledge\)](#) and commissioned by the Center for Reproductive Rights, people of color overwhelmingly said they would prefer to “Keep *Roe v. Wade*, which would mean that abortion remains legal in the U.S.”

- 79 percent of African Americans
- 71 percent of Latinxs
- 74 percent of Asians/Pacific Islanders

**The bottom line: Women of color face significant health disparities and the current Supreme Court vacancy threatens their health care even further. Who sits on the court will determine the course of our history, and the course of countless women’s lives.**