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Advocates From Across Missouri Rally to Protect Safe, Legal Abortion

Missourians join together to fight politicians' extreme attacks on safe, legal abortion

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — More than 200 Missourians from across the state gathered in Jefferson City on Wednesday to demand their lawmakers stop extreme, unconstitutional bills that would ban abortion. They began the day with a [rally in the Capitol Rotunda](#), where patients, physicians, faith leaders, health care workers and advocates all spoke with one message: Stop the bans.

A flank of “Handmaids” stood silently behind the speakers, watching over the rally. Inspired by [actions across the globe](#), these Missourians were dressed in character from The Handmaid’s Tale, a story of a dystopian society in which women are silenced and forced to give birth.

Following the rally, the Handmaids led the entire group of advocates to the Senate Gallery, where legislators are considering two of the most extreme abortion bills in the nation. House Bill 126, and its Missouri Senate counterpart, Senate Bill 279, ban abortion as early as six weeks — which is before most women even know they are pregnant. Neither bill has an exception for rape or incest, which could jeopardize Missouri’s \$7.2 billion in federal Medicaid funding. The bills also include — among many other medically unnecessary measures — a “trigger ban” that would ban abortion altogether if the U.S. Supreme Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*.

M’Evie Mead, Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri director of policy and organizing, sees the abortion bans as a serious threat to Missouri women’s health. “Abortion is health care. The lawmakers seeking to restrict Missourians’ access to safe, legal abortion must be called out for their real intention: running in a political race to make Missouri the state that overturns *Roe v. Wade* at the U.S. Supreme Court.”

Missouri women have a right to end a pregnancy. That decision is deeply personal, and belongs to a pregnant person, their family and their doctor — not politicians. Missouri politicians must start focusing on policies that actually improve the health of our communities.

Sara Baker, ACLU of Missouri legislative and policy director, states that women have a constitutional right to access a safe abortion. “The real agenda of these bills is to ban abortion

outright. Since they can't, they are using this restrictive law to put abortion out of reach. Measures like this do not end abortion, they end a woman's ability to safely obtain an abortion. That's why Missourians across the state are taking action. With our collective voice, we want to make one thing clear to politicians: stop the bans."

The day was organized by the #StopTheBans Coalition, building on its successful [Week of Action](#) in April. The unprecedented statewide coalition has formed to oppose this unprecedented threat to Missourians' access to safe, legal abortion. Visit [StopTheBansMO.org](#) to learn more about HB 126, SB 279 and the #StopTheBans Coalition.

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