

GOP disregards medical community and approves ban that threatens women's health and a woman's right to make her own decisions.

MADISON – Despite objections from Wisconsin families and doctors, Republicans in the State Senate approved a measure to place greater restrictions on abortion care. The proposal, Senate Bill 179 (SB 179), would prevent health professionals from delivering the highest standard of medical care to victims of rape and incest and women experiencing rare or unexpected pregnancy complications.



"We need to protect a woman's freedom to make decisions about her health care and prevent further political intrusion into personal decisions that are best left to a woman, her doctor, her family and her faith," said Senate Democratic Leader **Jennifer Shilling**. *"This bill jeopardizes women's safety and prevents health professionals from making life-saving medical decisions."*

Recognizing the dangerous situations this bill would create, the Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Medical College of Wisconsin, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health, the Wisconsin Public Health Association and the Wisconsin Medical Society all registered their opposition to SB 179.

"We should listen to the doctors in our state, the overwhelming abundance of peer-reviewed medical research and, most importantly, the women and families who will be placed in harm's way if this dangerous bill is passed," added Shilling. *"It is disappointing that Republicans are using this divisive bill to distract from Wisconsin's $2.2 billion budget crisis, the chronic underfunding of our local schools and the crumbling of our state's infrastructure. By prioritizing this dangerous abortion ban, the Republican Party is sending a clear message that their political ideology and Gov. Walker's presidential ambitions are more important than the health care needs of women and families across our state"*



Senator **Jon Erpenbach** of Madison said on the passage of the SB 179 Abortion Ban:

“Women and families in Wisconsin facing difficult decisions have had their health and lives put on the line with the passage of the dangerous abortion ban authored by Senator Lazich. Not one person in the Senate today is qualified to make these types of medical decisions, we are not doctors we are politicians. This bill puts the health of women on the line and prevents medical professionals from making decisions with their patients. By moving ahead with legislation that we know contains junk science that places non-medical terms in the statute, even the author must admit this Legislation is doomed to land in the courts. In the meantime we have threatened doctors and women in Wisconsin for political gain.”



Also Tuesday, Senator **Chris Larson** released the following statement on the Republican's move to ban abortions and once again attack a woman’s right to make her own choices:

“Today we saw yet another attack on a woman’s rights to make deeply personal decisions regarding her health care.

“Under this Republican bill, a woman experiencing serious health complications or severe fetal abnormalities would have no opportunity to make her own personal, private health care decisions. Furthermore, Republicans actually have the audacity to ban victims of rape and incest from having a choice to decide what is best for themselves. What’s worse, is that Republicans are taking an “eye for an eye” approach by valuing an unborn fetus over the life of the mother by making it so doctors would face prison time for providing abortion care to women – even if it were to preserve the life of the mother.

“Not every pregnancy ends in a baby. Some pregnancies go tragically wrong and can create serious health complications that threaten health, life or the viability of the pregnancy. Women deserve the freedom to decide what is best for her family. No politician should come between a

woman, her doctor, her family, and her faith. That is not our job and Republicans should be ashamed of the lack of empathy their actions today shows to the families in Wisconsin that have had to make these incredibly tough decisions.

“Republicans, once again, are simply choosing to ignore reality. At the public hearing for the bill, leading medical groups unanimously voiced their strong opposition, noting that this bill is not based on sound science. We know that nearly 99% of abortions in Wisconsin and the U.S. occur before 20 weeks gestation. In 2013, less than 100 abortions in Wisconsin occurred after 20 weeks. We know that these involve rare, severe fetal abnormalities and serious risks to the woman’s health, which are typically not discovered until the 20 week ultrasound.

“We heard countless stories from women and families who had to make these terribly hard decisions about wanted pregnancies at the public hearing for this bill. We heard from a family who found out at the 20 week ultrasound that their daughter had no brain function and would likely not survive labor or delivery. The family decided to end the pregnancy and induced labor at 22 weeks because they believed that to be the most loving and humane thing they could do for their daughter.

“Republicans heard the same heart breaking stories, yet chose to listen to their political allies who provide them with anecdotal and medically inaccurate information, which they use as gospel to justify passing this regressive-era legislation that takes Wisconsin backwards to the 1960s. Instead, we should trust women and move our state forward.”