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REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS STATEMENT, 6 JUNE 2022

As concerned members of society and residents of Westerly, RI, Westerly ARC is in full support of safe and free reproductive healthcare for women in our town, state, country, and world. We know the disgraceful decision by the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade* results in a patchwork of state abortion by laws, policies, and practices that will make accessing the medical care women need impossible, unsafe, and/or increasingly difficult. The realities of these horrific legal restrictions for reproductive medical care impact women most urgently but have residual impact on all people, families, and communities.

As a way to understand this complex landscape, the Guttmacher Institute, has developed an [interactive map](#) that groups states into one of seven categories based on abortion policies they currently have in effect. Users can select any state to see details about abortion policies in place, characteristics of state residents and key abortion statistics, including driving distance to the nearest abortion clinic.

Here is what you need to know about the basic [abortion policies currently in effect in Rhode Island](#):

- Abortion is banned at fetal viability, generally 24–26 weeks of pregnancy
- State Medicaid coverage of abortion care is banned except in very limited circumstances
- Parental consent or notice is required for a minor's abortion
- Unnecessary regulations are in force and designed to shutter abortion clinics without basis in medical standards

The overturning of *Roe v Wade* signals that other rights are in jeopardy including access to contraception, same-sex marriage, privacy in the bedroom, and all measures of racial equality. With this in mind, it is a critical time to make sure you know where your state and local politicians (current and future) stand on issues of paramount importance. With state and local elections coming up, now is the time to think about what is important to you and to be sure your voice is heard and your vote counts.

As we do the work to understand the deep impact of these transactional laws and policies, we also recognize the emotional and transformational effect they have on women, especially women with limited access to financial resources and women of color. We specifically hold these most vulnerable women at the center of this issue.

Lastly, Westerly ARC believes in opening up practical and urgent conversations about the importance of caring for ourselves and others by having the complicated conversations about preventing crisis pregnancies and when they do occur supporting women, men, and families as they make the difficult decisions that can impact generations.

About Westerly ARC

We are a Westerly-based multiracial, multicultural, and intergenerational coalition on a mission to embrace multiculturalism as a means to address racism through education and empowerment.

About Guttmacher Institute

Guttmacher Institute is a leading research and policy organization committed to advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) worldwide.