

## Talking Points

# Women's Health Protection Act

## National Council of Jewish Women's (NCJW) Message

NCJW believes that access to comprehensive, affordable, and equitable health care is a basic human right. However, reproductive health services are often singled out for restrictions that are not placed on any similar medical care. The Women's Health Protection Act (WHPA) — reintroduced in June 2021 by Reps. Judy Chu (D-CA), Lois Frankel (D-FL), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), and Veronica Escobar (D-TX) and Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) — would safeguard abortion access nationwide. **Lawmakers must pass WHPA to promote equal social and economic participation, reproductive and moral autonomy, and the right to determine our own lives.**

- **Abortion access is under a sustained and coordinated attack.** Since 2011, anti-abortion state lawmakers have passed nearly 500 restrictions forcing providers to perform unnecessary tests, regulating the width of clinic hallways, or even banning abortion outright. These oppressive laws have severely reduced or eliminated abortion access in large segments of the country by increasing costs, decreasing efficiency and number of providers, and delaying procedures. They also fall hardest on those who already face structural barriers to accessing health care — including women; Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC); those working to make ends meet; members of the LGBTQI+ community; immigrants; young people; those living in rural communities; and people with disabilities. Further, an individual's power to make their own, faith-informed decisions is obstructed when they are required to receive inaccurate or misleading information or clinically unnecessary services like ultrasounds, in-person counseling, and waiting periods.
- **Abortion care is a constitutional right that needs additional protection.** The rights to personal liberty and equal protection under the law are guaranteed to all by the US Constitution and do not depend on one's ZIP code. However, due to legislative attacks designed to undermine Supreme Court precedent, patients' ability to make their own personal decisions about reproductive health care varies widely from state to state. Consistent with the Jewish value of pursuing *tzedek* (justice) for all, NCJW firmly opposes laws that have created a patchwork of abortion access and pushed basic health care out of reach for many. With dozens of lawsuits challenging restrictive or unconstitutional state laws, including a direct challenge to *Roe v. Wade* before the Supreme Court, the time is now to address these threats with federal legislation.
- **WHPA would create a new tool for safeguarding access to high-quality care and securing constitutional rights by protecting patients and providers from political interference.** The bill guarantee providers the right to deliver abortion care — and people the right to receive that care — without limitations that single out abortion or impede access to care. Importantly, the bill would also establish clear guidance for courts considering whether a requirement impedes access to abortion care in violation of WHPA. We call on Congress to pass WHPA to protect access to abortion and to help us build a society where all women, children, and families can thrive in our communities with dignity.