

Talking Points

Women's Health Protection Act

NCJW believes that access to comprehensive, affordable, and equitable health care is a basic human right. The Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturning the right to abortion means millions of people cannot access the vital health care they need, when they need it. The Women's Health Protection Act (WHPA), introduced by Reps. Judy Chu (D-CA), Lois Frankel (D-FL), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), and Veronica Escobar (D-TX) in the House, and Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) in the Senate, would safeguard abortion access nationwide. The House of Representatives passed WHPA on September 24, 2021, and then again on July 15, 2022. The Senate must pass WHPA to ensure social and economic equality, reproductive autonomy, and the right to determine our own lives.

- **Abortions are becoming increasingly inaccessible in the U.S.** Since the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, abortion is currently banned in eight states, with more restrictions and bans expected. These oppressive laws create new barriers to accessing health care by increasing costs (especially for travel) and delaying time-sensitive procedures — and they strain the resources of providers in states where abortion is still legal. 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, LGBTQ folks, immigrants, young people, those living in rural areas, and people with disabilities.
- **Abortion care is a right that must be restored.** In 2020, almost one in ten people who received an abortion traveled out of their home state for care. This number is expected to increase as states continue to restrict, ban, and criminalize abortion. Federal legislation is necessary to restore the right to abortion. Consistent with the Jewish value of pursuing *tzedeck* (justice) for all, NCJW opposes laws that have created a patchwork of abortion access and pushed basic health care out of reach for many. Access to reproductive healthcare should not depend on one's zip code. Our religion supports abortion as health care — indeed, Jewish law views abortion as not only permissible, but required when necessary to safeguard the wellbeing of a pregnant person. Above all, Judaism teaches us to respect and affirm the dignity of all people.
- **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.** Unlike other bills that purport to codify abortion into law, WHPA guarantees providers the right to deliver abortion care — and people the right to receive that care — without limitations that 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 the Senate 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.