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To: Interested Parties

From: NARAL Pro-Choice America Research Team

Date: June 22, 2023

Anti-Abortion Extremists' Post-Dobbs Campaign to Cover Up Their Cruelty

One year after the anti-abortion supermajority on the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* to end the constitutional right to abortion, we are witnessing the increasingly devastating impacts of their decision. Meanwhile, the same anti-abortion extremists who celebrated the *Dobbs* decision and have spent the year since passing bans and restrictions on abortion care are now conducting a disingenuous campaign to cover up the dangerous ramifications. Republican politicians are attempting to distract the public from the harm of anti-abortion policies by casting themselves and the broader anti-abortion movement as supportive of (cisgender) women, their health, and their families. The GOP is scrambling to evade responsibility for its actions because voters across party, gender, and racial lines oppose political interference in decisions about abortion care—and they're making that clear at the ballot box.

Right now, 26.1 million women of reproductive age¹ are living across 20 states that have eliminated or restricted abortion access because of bans passed by GOP lawmakers and signed by GOP governors. Republicans' tepid support for social safety net policies that they have historically opposed is a front. They are seeking to conceal the ruthlessness of the anti-abortion agenda—and voters aren't falling for the cover-up.

Republicans in Missouri, Utah, Wyoming, North Dakota, and Mississippi passed legislation to expand postpartum Medicaid coverage while advancing horrific attacks on abortion care, patients, and providers.

- Missouri [proposed legislation](#) that would allow pregnant people to be criminalized on murder charges for having an abortion.
- Utah [passed](#) a (now-blocked) backdoor abortion ban prohibiting abortion clinics from operating in the state under the [guise](#) of "protecting women's health."
- Wyoming [enacted](#) a total abortion ban that is temporarily blocked in state court and became the first state to explicitly [ban](#) medication abortion.
- North Dakota [enacted](#) and Mississippi is enforcing a total ban on abortion with criminal penalties for providers.

Instead of funding evidence-based, accessible health care, Republicans use taxpayer dollars to support fake health centers (FHCs, sometimes known as "crisis pregnancy centers" or "pregnancy resource centers"). Especially in states enforcing abortion bans, Republicans are advertising these deceptive centers to launder their reputations and appear "pro-woman."

¹The data in this report is sourced from the U.S. Census Bureau population estimates based on bridged race categories from the National Center for Health Statistics. It does not include people who can get pregnant but do not identify as women—if we factor in that population, the harm is even greater.



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- [Arkansas](#), [West Virginia](#), [North Dakota](#), [Florida](#), and [Mississippi](#) enacted; [Louisiana](#) passed; and [Oklahoma](#), [Kansas](#), [Tennessee](#), and [Maryland](#) proposed legislation to fund FHCs, including appropriating state funds for them and authorizing tax credits for donations to them.
- Anti-abortion politicians and [groups promote](#) these centers and their [conditional](#) provision of prenatal care and parenting resources to feign support for (cisgender) women. But FHCs are actually focused on [targeting](#), shaming, and misleading people who have already decided to have an abortion to stop them from accessing care.
- GOP initiatives purporting to support pregnant people's health and future parenthood are a sham. The reality is that Republicans consistently block people from the health care they need. Though Tennessee, Florida, Mississippi, and Kansas push funding for FHCs, they [refuse](#) to expand Medicaid. In fact, all nine states in which Republicans still refuse to expand Medicaid—blocking people working to make ends meet from access to health care—are states that have eliminated or restricted abortion access because of bans.

Some Republicans are busy touting their efforts to expand access to paid maternity leave and carve out “exceptions” to abortion bans while downplaying their attempts to subject pregnant people to the death penalty or throw them in jail for having an abortion.

- Anti-abortion [politicians](#) in Arkansas, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Oklahoma [are sponsoring](#) paid leave [benefits](#) and “[exceptions](#)” to abortion bans for the [health](#) of the pregnant person and [rape or incest](#) to [divert](#) attention away from their desire to punish women. But it's easy to see through Republicans' fake feminism: conservatives in [Arkansas](#) and [Oklahoma](#) actually sought to remove statutory language protecting people who have an abortion from prosecution. [Republican bills](#) in Arkansas, South Carolina, and Kentucky would allow people to be sentenced to death on homicide charges for accessing abortion care.
- “[Exceptions](#)” to abortion bans don't work—and they were never meant to. They were designed to trick voters into thinking that anti-abortion lawmakers care about pregnant people. But the policies these conservatives are promoting fail to reflect clinical realities or account for the trauma of sexual assault—underscoring the emptiness of the GOP's “pro-woman” efforts.

Here's the truth: 8 in 10 people in our country support legal abortion. Anti-abortion extremists know that and are opting to deceive voters to try to stay in power. They claim to champion (cisgender) women—all the while trying to criminalize and silence them. It's no coincidence that Republicans are trying to [make it harder](#) to do state ballot initiatives: they don't want voters to have a direct say in abortion laws because the vast majority of Americans aren't with them. It's the ultimate cover-up attempt, and it won't work. One year after *Dobbs*, Americans are living under abortion bans, subject to state surveillance, facing a rising number of maternal health emergencies, and watching as Republicans continue to undermine our democracy. Nothing the GOP does to deflect attention from the reality of its agenda will make people forget its horrifying attacks on our freedoms—and that's what they'll carry with them to the ballots in 2024.