

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM FOR ALL

Date: November 1, 2023

To: Interested Parties

Re: Voters Are Too Smart to Fall for GOP Attempts to Rebrand “Ban”

As we have learned in every state, federal, and special election since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, abortion matters to voters—and it matters because it impacts their lives, their families, and their futures. Americans instinctively understand abortion as a matter of personal freedom, and they’re eager to vote for candidates who agree that they should have the freedom to make their own decisions. Poll after poll affirms that the vast majority of Americans support the right to legal abortion. Election after election proves they will vote to protect that right.

As Republican politicians confront the reality that their extreme abortion stance is incredibly unpopular—having lost big at every election since *Roe* was overturned, even in red states—they are desperate to mask their policies with deliberately misleading misnomers, substituting “limit,” “consensus,” and “reasonable compromise” for the real name for their policy: ban.

We’ve seen countless think pieces the last month asking, “Will it work?” The answer is no.

Here’s the proof:

Voters Aren’t Buying it Now and Won’t Be Fooled in November

Voters aren’t buying Republicans’ attempted rebrand and the research proves it. In one recent poll, [voters reported that](#) despite GOP politicians’ attempts to cast their extreme policies as moderate, they understood that Republicans have one goal: to ban all abortion, everywhere.¹

How have Americans been able to see so clearly through the smoke and mirrors of the GOP?

They live in post-*Roe* America, where the abortion access crisis created by the GOP gives rise to

¹ Nearly two-thirds say Senate Republicans want to ban abortion (62%), including half of Independents (51%) and nearly three-quarters of Black voters (+72). Republican voters aren’t sure about their own party’s intentions: 44% say Senate Republicans want to ban abortion while 33% say they want to pass small restrictions. Nearly two-thirds say that Republicans will pass or try to pass more restrictions if they win the next election (64%). These Republican positions alienate voters: a majority agrees that Republicans are more extreme on the issue than Democrats (52%). While Democrats nearly universally trust Democrats over Republicans on abortion (+91), Republicans are more conflicted (+64), with nearly a third of voters not trusting their own party on abortion policy. Black (+65), AAPI (+28), and Hispanic (+19) voters trust Democrats, while White voters are divided (-1).

a new horror story every day—all direct outgrowths of abortion bans enacted at the state level and the chaos created by a patchwork of laws and policies that make it nearly impossible to access basic reproductive health care when and where you need it.

They see the gap between the GOP's insistence that banning abortion at 15 weeks is "reasonable" and "moderate" and the reality on display in states like Florida. Simply put, there's nothing reasonable about forcing a pregnant person to [carry a fetus who will only live a few painful hours](#), and there's nothing moderate about forcing a pregnant person to [deliver a miscarriage in a hair salon bathroom](#).

There is No Such Thing as a Good Abortion Ban

The GOP's much-touted solution to their abortion problem—a [15-week ban with "exceptions"](#)—already doesn't pass voters' smell tests. That's because even as GOP politicians promise us that people who really need abortions will be able to access them, even in states where abortion is banned, voters are confronted with the failure of these one-size-fits-all bans every day, including bans with "exceptions."

For starters, [by a more than 2-to-1 margin](#), voters think decisions about abortion care should be made by patients and their doctors, not dictated by arbitrary 15-week bans. Democratic and independent voters overwhelmingly prefer to leave these decisions up to patients and doctors. Only a slim majority of Republicans, 54%, prefer 15-week bans.

Even the GOP's supposed golden ticket—so-called exceptions included in abortion bans to make them palatable to voters—crumbles under scrutiny. Stories of women and pregnant people nearly bleeding to death before receiving care or pre-teens being forced to give birth to their rapist's baby prove the lie at the heart of these "exceptions": they're not meant to ensure care. They're meant to ensure support for abortion bans.

Voters, even those who identify as anti-abortion, oppose these policies that prevent people with life-threatening medical conditions from getting an abortion until they are near death (87% oppose), [including more than two-thirds of self-identified anti-abortion voters](#) (66% oppose). They understand that one-size-fits-all bans, even those with "exceptions," aren't based in reality, where every pregnancy is unique. No law can account for the infinite possible complexities that make abortion care necessary.

That's right: anti-abortion voters overwhelmingly disagree with the policy the GOP thinks will save them in the 2023 elections.

A Ban By Any Other Name is Still a Ban

There is no place in the country where abortion bans are popular, and there is no group of Americans who have voted to restrict their own freedoms in the wake of the Supreme Court overturning *Roe*.

In fact, voters have made it clear they want the exact opposite of what the GOP has to offer.

[Battleground voters want abortion rights restored nationwide](#): nearly two-thirds (65%) want abortion to be legal in most or all circumstances. ²

What's more, voter sentiment suggests that the GOP has overplayed its post-*Dobbs* hand— even with its most strident supporters. [Nearly three-quarters of voters agree](#) that the GOP has gone too far on abortion and politicians need to back down, including a majority (51%) of those who voted for Donald Trump in 2020.

Additionally, majorities of every demographic and geographic group agree that things have gone too far. [Over two-thirds of every racial or ethnic group believe it](#). Even among rural white men, who tend to be less supportive of abortion care than virtually any other group, 55% believe things have gone too far.

Bottom Line: Republicans Are Not Fooling Voters

The GOP thinks they can message their way out of accountability for the harm they've caused to countless American families. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Voters have made themselves clear: they oppose the GOP policy of one-size-fits-all abortion bans, exceptions that don't work, interference in the decisions they make with their families and their doctors, and restrictions on their fundamental freedoms.

No matter what they call it, or how they try to couch it, the truth remains that voters don't want it, and they won't be fooled into taking it.

² That includes majorities of Democrats (87%), Independents (65%), and Republican women (51%) as well as majorities of Black (76%), AAPI (72%), Hispanic (65%), and White (64%) voters.