

**TO: Interested Parties**

**FROM: Reproductive Freedom for All, EMILYs List, and Planned Parenthood Action Fund**

**RE: No, Republicans Are Not Changing Their Tune on Abortion**

**DATE: October 2, 2024**

Abortion is mobilizing voters nationwide in support of candidates who will fight for reproductive freedom, and Republicans know it. That's why some candidates are bending over backward to scrub their websites, rebrand themselves, and conceal their anti-abortion records and agenda from voters.

But contrary to some recent headlines, they're not changing their agenda. They are simply changing their rhetoric in the hopes voters won't hold them accountable for their anti-abortion policies.

### **Anti-Abortion Candidates Are Running From Their Records**

From candidates in key U.S. House and Senate races to Trump himself, some Republicans have seen the writing on the wall and are desperately trying to pretend they aren't wildly out of touch with the vast majority of Americans who support legal abortion.

Just this week, Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump [denied his plan](#) to ban abortion nationwide as his running mate responded to questions about his anti-abortion record during the vice presidential debate, and the ticket was rewarded with headlines falsely crediting him with changing his position. It follows Trump telling voters recently at a Pennsylvania rally that if elected he would be "great for women and their reproductive rights. In truth, Trump is the most extreme, anti-abortion president in recent history and if he wins this November, he will move to ban abortion nationwide. As [Politico reported](#) on his comments, they were just the latest in "his campaign's frenzied attempt to reset the narrative in the race against Vice President Kamala Harris and present more moderately on the issue of abortion, which has plagued Republicans electorally since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned in 2022."

Meanwhile, [some candidates in congressional races](#) are following his lead. Some are [falsely claiming](#) that they and Trump are "pro-choice," despite a record that proves otherwise. Others are claiming they support IVF despite having backed policies that could ban it, or in the case of the GOP Senate, voting against efforts to protect IVF.

This election cycle is far from the only time that anti-abortion candidates have deployed this strategy. During the 2022 midterms, candidates [scrubbed their websites](#) of their anti-abortion platforms, [penned op-eds](#) trying to conceal their records, and [tried to change the subject](#) as often as they could. In 2023, Republicans in Virginia used a similar playbook, [trying to hide their positions](#) and [rebrand abortion bans](#) in order to appear less extreme to voters. Spoiler: It didn't work then and it won't work now.

### **Reproductive Freedom Matters to Voters**

If there is any question about why candidates are trying to dodge their anti-abortion record, the answer is simple – they know that voters want nothing to do with it. The polling speaks for itself:

- **Eight in 10 Americans say the decision to have an abortion should be made by the person who is pregnant.** [Washington Post/ABC News, [May 2023](#)]
- **Support for abortion has increased** since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, and around **eight in 10 Americans say Congress should not pass a federal law banning abortion.** [Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, [July 2024](#)]
- **For women younger than 45, abortion has overtaken the economy as the single most important issue** to their vote. [New York Times/Siena College, [Aug. 2024](#)]
- **By a 31-point margin (58%-27%), Americans describe the GOP's abortion position as extreme**, including Independents by 30 points (50% extreme – 20% not extreme), and a third of Republicans. [Navigator, [Oct. 2023](#)]
- **A record-high number of voters say they would only vote for candidates who share their views on abortion – including nearly twice as many voters who support abortion rights than those who don't.** [Gallup, [June 2024](#)]
- **75% of young people ages 18-34 say abortion should be legal** in all or most circumstances, and **61% say they would take action to protect abortion rights.** [Change Research/Teen Vogue, [Aug.-Sept. 2023](#)]
- **61% of voters disapprove** of the U.S Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe* – including 80% of female voters ages 18-49, two-thirds of suburban women, 60% of Independents, and a third of Republican voters. [NBC News, [June 2023](#)]

### **Abortion Is a Winning Issue — And That's Why Anti-Abortion Candidates Are Trying to Hide Their Records**

Not only are voters aware of the horror stories unfolding across the country, they also know who is behind them. From the tragic, preventable deaths of [Amber Nicole Thurman](#) and [Candi Miller](#) as a result of Georgia's abortion ban to the [hundreds of cases](#) of people being criminalized for their pregnancy outcomes, voters are witnessing firsthand the deadly and dangerous consequences of the GOP's work to ban all abortion.

As more stories of the harm anti-abortion politicians are waging on our families and communities come to light, voters will only grow more outraged — and Republican politicians more desperate to cover up the impact of their policies.

Abortion rights and access remain as salient as ever. Voters don't want abortion bans or the politicians that peddle them. What they want are leaders who are not only vocal champions for reproductive freedom, but lawmakers who will also work to enact legislation that protects and

expands their rights. In the leadup to Election Day, GOP candidates will only double down on the false narrative that they and their party have shifted to be more “moderate” on abortion. But look at what they do, not what they say — because their records could not be clearer.

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