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Salem OR 97301

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NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Lindsey O'Brien
lindsey.obrien@oregonlegislature.gov

Oregon Reproductive Health Equity Fund will counter attacks on abortion access

Funding will mitigate harm of looming abortion ban in Idaho, prepare for U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade

SALEM – With access to abortion care facing extreme attacks across the country, Oregon lawmakers stepped up to protect reproductive healthcare by establishing the Oregon Reproductive Health Equity Fund in the recently adjourned 2022 legislative session.

The legislature approved \$15 million in the session's final budget bill ([House Bill 5202](#)) to mitigate harm from a looming Supreme Court decision that could completely undermine the nationwide right to abortion under Roe v. Wade. The threat came into even sharper relief this week when Idaho became the first state to pass a six-week abortion ban based on Texas' radical law.

“Abortion and the full spectrum of reproductive health services must be available and affordable for anyone who needs it,” Oregon House Speaker Dan Rayfield (D-Corvallis) said. “This \$15 million will deliver on Oregon's commitment to reproductive freedom by sending practical, meaningful support for people in our state – no matter what happens in Boise, Washington D.C. or anywhere else.”

In 2017, legislative leaders recognized the long-term threat to abortion access and passed the Reproductive Health Equity Act (RHEA), which codifies the right to an abortion in state law and makes family planning, abortion, and postpartum care available to all Oregonians.

The Reproductive Health Equity Fund builds on RHEA's foundation by addressing the barriers that still exist for people seeking reproductive health care in Oregon. [Seeding Justice](#) will distribute the \$15 million to address immediate and urgent patient needs for abortion funds and practical support, like travel and lodging, and to expand provider network capacity.

“The Reproductive Health Equity Act laid an important foundation, and now we must remain vigilant and keep working to strengthen and expand these protections,” Rep. Andrea Valderrama (D-Portland) said. “Abortion is healthcare. Every individual should have access to the full range of reproductive services that are available. These funds take a critical next step by investing in culturally specific reproductive health outreach and education programs, led by and centered within communities of color.”

In the coming months, the U.S. Supreme Court has the potential to upend nearly 50 years of federal protections for abortion and pave the way for [26 states](#) that are poised to severely restrict or outright ban abortion access, including Idaho.

“People from states with more restrictive laws already travel to Oregon for abortion care, and we face the very real likelihood that other states will ban abortion and shutter clinics,” said Rep. Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-North and Northeast Portland), co-chair of the Joint Ways and Means Committee. “We are rising to this alarming moment to invest in abortion access as a central foundation of Oregon’s healthcare infrastructure.”

“Four generations of women in my family believe that people should have the right to choose when they become parents,” Rep. Courtney Neron (D-Washington County) said. “I am committed to a future in which the full range of reproductive healthcare, including abortion, is accessible to whomever needs it, when they need it.”

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