

MEMO OF SUPPORT
REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM AND EQUITY PROGRAM

A.10148-A González-Rojas/S.9078-A Cleare
2022

According to [a leaked draft majority opinion](#), the U.S. Supreme Court has voted to strike down *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision that guaranteed federal constitutional protections of abortion rights. While this decision is not final, it is clear that New York needs to prepare for an imminent post-*Roe* national landscape. While the Reproductive Health Act of 2019 preserves the legality of abortion in NY, that right is meaningless without access. This bill would create a **funding mechanism** through the NYS Department of Health to **provide grants to abortion providers and abortion funds**, the organizations that make the right to care a reality for people seeking abortions.

Since *Roe* was decided, state legislatures across the country have enacted 1,300 abortion restrictions¹ designed to keep abortion inaccessible, including outright bans as well as laws to shut down clinics, restrict insurance coverage, and create obstacles for people seeking abortion care. In addition to legal restrictions, patients face barriers like affording the cost of care, travel, childcare, lodging and lost wages. For decades, abortion funds have supported individuals seeking abortion navigate these barriers, assisting with funding and logistics.² **More people will need help from abortion funds when *Roe* is overturned.**

At the same time, **New York's abortion providers are already struggling with limited capacity** to provide care to all who need it. This is the reality we face in New York:

- Funding for sexual and reproductive health has remained flat for more than a decade, a functional cut, while the costs of delivering care have increased exponentially year to year;³
- New York has no ongoing, dedicated investment in abortion care. There is a lack of sustained funding for workforce training and development. No funds to address uncompensated care or supporting the logistical needs of low-income abortion patients;
- Planned Parenthood affiliates and other safety-net providers are finding it increasingly challenging to maintain staff in a competitive market, given their limited resources. This limits access to care by increasing waiting times for appointments, delaying care which can exacerbate existing health disparities and negatively impact health outcomes; and
- Hospitals and hospital-based clinics continue to face severe staffing shortages and capacity issues. These providers need access to workforce training and development resources to ensure enhanced access to complex family planning services.

If the Supreme Court overturns *Roe*, abortion access is expected to further erode in at least 26 states across the country. As a result, for 190,000 – 280,000 women living out-of-state, New York would become their nearest location to an abortion provider.⁴ The only way that SRH services, including abortion, will remain available to all is if New York commits to long-term investments to support access. Governor Hochul's critical commitment of \$35 million for abortion providers will be impactful and critically needed in the coming months as they work diligently to grow their capacity to meet the need present today, and the increased need we anticipate in the near future. Passing A.10148-A/S.9078-A will ensure that State funding

¹ Nash, E. (2021, June 23). Abortion Is at the Supreme Court Again. It's Different This Time. Guttmacher Institute. <https://www.guttmacher.org/article/2021/06/abortion-supreme-court-again-its-different-time>

² "What are abortion funds?," About, National Network of Abortion Funds, <https://abortionfunds.org/about/>

³ According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, between 2012 and 2020, New York State's annual mean wage for RNs rose from \$74,100 to \$89,760; for NPs, from \$97,370 to \$126,440; and for PAs, from \$96,200 to \$126,370 (State Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>).

⁴ Guttmacher Institute, If *Roe v. Wade* Falls: Travel Distance for People Seeking Abortion, <https://states.guttmacher.org/#new-york>

will continue to be a reliable source of support in the years ahead for abortion access. We must ensure the right to care is a reality for all, regardless of who they are, where they live, and how much money they make.

Access to abortion and other reproductive care is already non-existent in many parts of the country – even for some people here in New York. If *Roe* falls, New York's existing protections for abortion won't be enough to ensure access. **Now is the time for New York to be bold.** Our state needs to take leadership in the fight for abortion justice by advancing key policies to expand access for all, including **passing A.10148-A/S.9078-A.**