



SYNOPSIS

Committee: Health, Environment, and Technology

City Council Resolution: 22-0110R

Investigative Hearing – Baltimore City as an Abortion Rights Protection Jurisdiction

Sponsor: Councilmember Middleton, et al

Introduced: June 13, 2022

Purpose:

For the purpose of requesting that the City Solicitor and representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department appear before the City Council to evaluate if Baltimore City is prepared for an influx of patients seeking to terminate a pregnancy, to identify current barriers to accessing abortion healthcare services, to identify disparities in the ability to access abortion healthcare, specifically for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community and for marginalized racial and ethnic groups, to identify safety concerns abortion healthcare providers have in the present political environment and explore how to address these concerns, and to specify how the recently-passed State Abortion Care Access Act will affect abortion healthcare services in Baltimore City.

Effective: Upon enactment

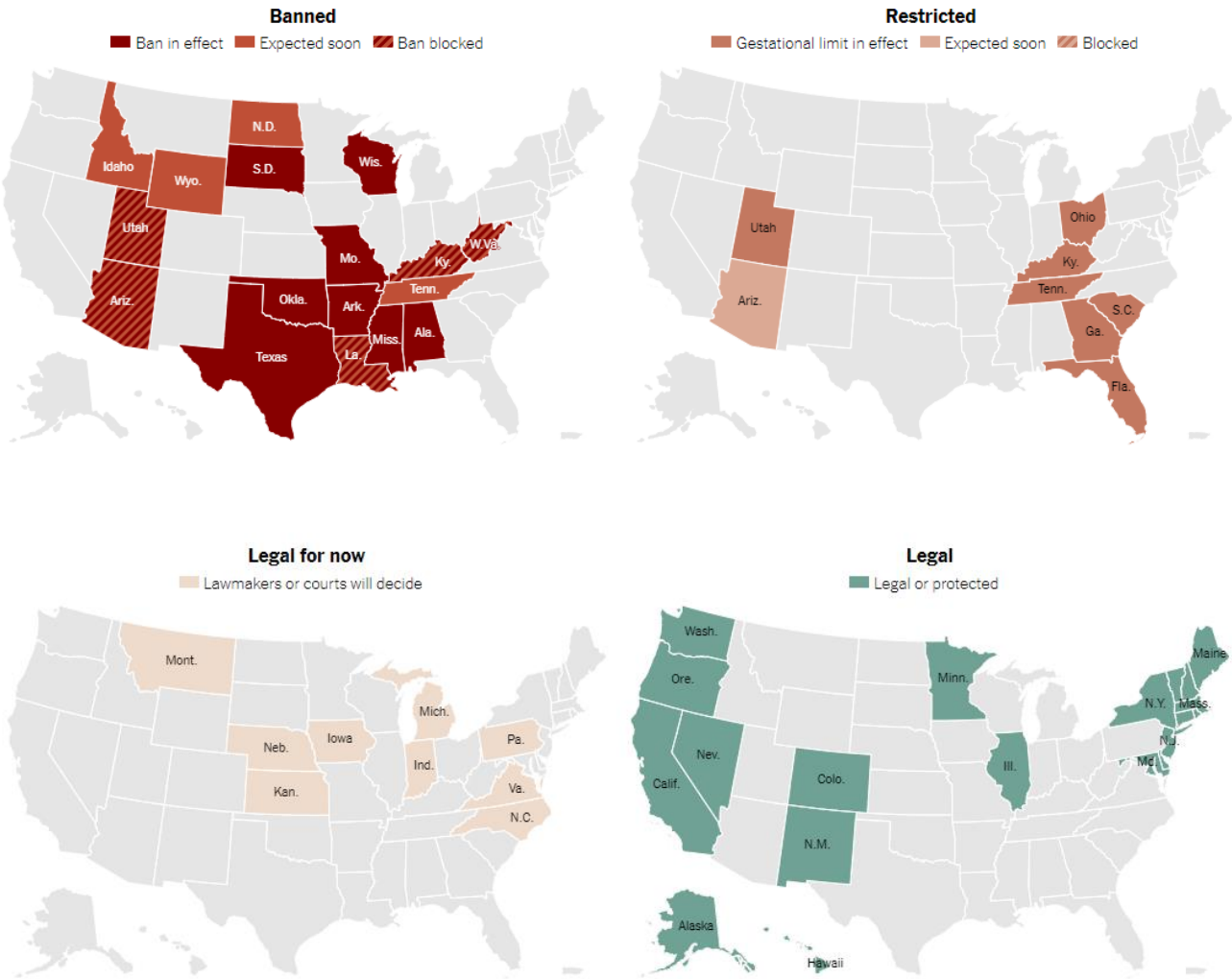
AGENCY REPORTS

Health Department	
City Solicitor	Favorable

ANALYSIS

The resolution asks the City Solicitor and representatives from the Baltimore City Health Department to appear before the City Council to discuss various issues related to abortion healthcare services. The U.S. Supreme Court’s recent decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* overturned the Court’s prior decision in *Roe v. Wade* and declared that there is no longer a right to abortion healthcare under the U.S. Constitution.

Abortion healthcare access in many states is likely to evolve quickly in the coming months and years as laws are challenged in state courts and state elected officials consider new laws to restrict or protect abortion healthcare access. As of July 20, 2022, 15 states have bans or restrictions on abortion in effect. Abortion bans in 5 states have been blocked, at least temporarily, by state courts.



Source: New York Times

Of the states immediately adjacent to Maryland, only West Virginia has an existing ban on abortion and enforcement of that law is currently blocked by a West Virginia State Court pending litigation. Abortion is currently legal in Pennsylvania and Virginia, but the policies of those states could change in coming years as a result of future elections. The District of Columbia and Delaware both have laws protecting access to abortion healthcare.

The Maryland Abortion Care Access Act went into effect on July 1, 2022, and includes several provisions designed to protect access to abortion healthcare and ensure that there are enough health professionals qualified to provide abortion healthcare. The Act specifies that any qualified provider may perform an abortion, including any physician, nurse practitioner, nurse-midwife, licensed certified midwife, physician assistant, or any other individual who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized by law to perform abortions. The Act also establishes the Abortion Care Clinical Training Program and a related special fund, for which the Governor must include an appropriation of \$3.5 million annually. The Act further establishes requirements for health insurance and Medicaid coverage for abortion healthcare services.

On June 24, 2022, Mayor Scott announced that the City of Baltimore would provide \$300,000 in grants to organizations that offer abortion and family planning services for Baltimore residents and visitors. The Baltimore Civic Fund will distribute the funding directly to organizations that provide abortion and family planning services through a new Abortion Protection Fund. The Abortion Protection Fund is now open for applications from qualified organizations through August 5, 2022, at 5 p.m.

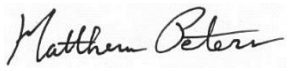
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fiscal Note: None

Information Source(s):

- *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* (June 24, 2022): https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/19-1392_6j37.pdf
- New York Times, Tracking the States Where Abortion Is Now Banned (Updated July 20, 2022): <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/us/abortion-laws-roe-v-wade.html>
- Reuters, West Virginia judge blocks pre-Roe v. Wade abortion ban (July 18, 2022): <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/west-virginia-judge-blocks-pre-roe-v-wade-abortion-ban-2022-07-18/>
- Maryland Abortion Care Access Act (HB0937): <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0937>
- Press Release, Mayor Scott Allocates \$300,000 to Abortion and Family Planning Service Providers (June 24, 2022): <https://mayor.baltimorecity.gov/news/press-releases/2022-06-24-mayor-scott-allocates-300000-abortion-and-family-planning-service>
- Baltimore Civic Fund, 2022 Abortion Protection Fund: <https://www.baltimorecivicfund.org/abortion-protection-fund-about-1>
- Reporting Agencies
- Resolution 22-0110R

Analysis by:
Analysis Date:


Matthew L. Peters
July 22, 2022

Direct Inquiries to: (410) 396-1268