

Reproductive Justice and Reproductive Rights are Workers' Rights

Resolution of the Texas AFL-CIO Women's Committee

Passed by the Austin Central Labor Council, July 2022

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court of the United States decision to overturn Roe v Wade will have a devastating impact on Texas workers' ability to provide for themselves and their families, and their right to privacy, and the right of women and all people to control their own bodies and make decisions about their own health care, and

WHEREAS, Texas has anti-abortion laws in place that will force people to travel outside of the state to access an abortion, and many will be forced to carry out unplanned pregnancies, and

WHEREAS, the cost to travel outside of the state to receive abortion care is estimated to cost \$4,000 or more¹, and requires taking several days off work, creating impossible financial and logistical barriers for many working people, and

WHEREAS, having access to affordable health care, including reproductive care and abortion, is essential for all workers, and all workers should be able to decide when and how they start a family on a timeline that works for them, and

WHEREAS, access to reproductive health care and abortion increases a working family's financial well-being, job security, workforce participation, and educational opportunities, and

WHEREAS, studies show that Black women, women of color, and low wage workers are less likely to have access to paid family leave, paid sick leave, and meaningful protections for pregnant workers. Lacking these protections, many of these workers lose their jobs and financial security when they become pregnant², and

WHEREAS, for decades the labor movement has fought for all workers to have access to health care, but many union self-funded Trust health plans require union members to pay out-of-pocket for some reproductive health care services, and

WHEREAS, the 1199-SEIU National Benefit Fund guarantees abortion coverage, but other union Trusts explicitly exclude medications that induce abortion from prescription drug coverage and/or exclude elective abortion³, and

WHEREAS, the Texas labor movement must lead in this moment and be an outspoken advocate for better protections for women and pregnant people in the workplace and in collective bargaining agreements, as well as for local, state, and federal legislation that will protect safe and affordable access to reproductive health care and abortion, and

WHEREAS, in the past the Texas labor movement has stood up for healthcare, women's rights, and LGBTQ+ rights because these are all workplace issues, and the health & wellbeing of union members depends on a strong, intersectional labor movement, and

WHEREAS, reproductive care and abortion access are fundamentally a health care issue and all workers should have guaranteed access to reproductive health care, and

WHEREAS, the Texas AFL-CIO represents 235,000 union members who will feel the collective impact of the overturning of Roe v Wade and the loss of a vital health care right, and

WHEREAS, the International Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers President issued the following statement, “the right of workers to control their own bodies cannot be separated from the right of workers to control their own labor. BAC will remain engaged to support the right of women, and all workers, to make their own decisions about their health and body”, and

WHEREAS, many other prominent international and local labor leaders as well as regional labor bodies have publicly denounced SCOTUS’ decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, and have affirmed abortion as a worker’s right including: National AFL-CIO President Liz Schuler, AFSCME International President Lee Saunders (“Reproductive rights are workers’ rights. Reproductive justice is economic justice. The decision about when and whether to bear children is fundamental to the ability to pursue self-sustaining work”), SEIU International President Mary Kay Henry, AFA-CWA President Sara Nelson, Oregon AFL-CIO President Graham Trainor, AFT President Randi Weingarten, CLUW President Elise Bryant, APALA, Pride at Work, IUPAT, PA AFL-CIO, WA AFL-CIO, Maine AFL-CIO, APWU, UAW, and countless other Internationals, Locals and regional federations, and

Now Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, that Labor make a commitment to ensure that women maintain their right to reproductive choice and have access to all reproductive health services by issuing a Press Release to media outlets affirming the same, and coordinating with like-minded organizations in their efforts to achieve Reproductive Justice in our communities; and

RESOLVED, that Labor pledge its support for the national Women’s Health Protection Act (WHPA), a Congressional bill that would effectively codify a woman’s right to abortion nation-wide, and

RESOLVED, that Labor serve as a resource to affiliated unions to help them with contract language to protect women seeking reproductive healthcare from retaliation and discrimination, and guarantee union member access to comprehensive reproductive service coverage, including reimbursement of travel costs out of state to access abortion services, elective abortion, and medicinal abortions, and

RESOLVED that Labor support affiliate members in their efforts to advocate with Taft-Hartley Trust administrators to make immediate changes to their health plans to fully cover reproductive health care, including travel costs out of state, elective abortion, and medicinal abortions; and

RESOLVED that Labor will modify COPE endorsement questionnaires to reflect our state positions on Reproductive Justice to ensure that endorsed labor candidates stand with our union sisters & brothers and their families to protect their human right to bodily autonomy