

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resolution

RESOLUTION ON REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE AND FREEDOM

- WHEREAS,** the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade—a legal precedent which upheld the constitutional right to privacy and freedom of choice regarding abortion—sets the clock back approximately 50 years and jeopardizes the health and lives of countless Americans; and
- WHEREAS,** the right to safe and legal abortion is a fundamental human right and must be protected for all, especially in the aftermath of the Supreme Court’s dangerous decision; and
- WHEREAS,** the current ruling will have a chilling effect on reproductive healthcare providers and their patients, and it will create a new and limiting landscape in how reproductive healthcare providers are trained; and
- WHEREAS,** ending a pregnancy should not be criminalized by government; and
- WHEREAS,** safe, legal, accessible, and affordable abortion care is essential for safeguarding health, reducing mortality and morbidity, enabling healthy spacing of pregnancies, and promoting health equity; and
- WHEREAS,** eliminating constitutional rights to make decisions about one’s own body will adversely impact people of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community, who encounter racism from health care providers at higher rates; disproportionately experience discrimination and access limitations to healthcare services and resources; face unequal pay; and are more likely than their White counterparts to lack health insurance; and
- WHEREAS,** banning access to healthcare particularly exacerbates the risk of negative reproductive and maternal health outcomes, with lasting health and economic consequences for individuals and society as a whole; and
- WHEREAS,** existing health inequities will hold true with access to reproductive care: those populations that face systemic oppression and barriers with limited access to healthcare will be up against heightened challenges in seeking abortion care, affordable contraceptives, comprehensive reproductive health information and education, gender affirming care, and freedom from sexual violence; and
- WHEREAS,** the Supreme Court ruling will make access to some abortions impossible or extremely difficult, depending on where in the US one lives, number of weeks gestation, medical conditions, and other factors; and
- WHEREAS,** a United States district court judge in North Carolina recently allowed a law that bans abortions after twenty weeks of pregnancy to be reinstated; and
- WHEREAS,** reproductive health restrictions can have long-lasting negative mental, physical health and financial impacts on people’s lives; and
- WHEREAS,** our historic women-led Durham County Board of Commissioners is committed to the protection of all women, trans, and gender non-conforming people’s access to reproductive healthcare and safe abortion; and
- WHEREAS,** President Biden has issued an Executive Order to Protect Access to Abortion and Reproductive Health Services, including access to federally approved medication abortion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Durham County Board of Commissioners, do hereby reaffirm our commitment to a broad and ambitious vision to protect and transform all the structural conditions required to ensure reproductive justice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT that the Durham County Board of Commissioners commit to support and enhance the Durham County Department of Public Health’s provision of client-centered family planning, sexual health, and reproductive health services; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT that Durham County staff will explore ways to protect access to abortion and reproductive health services and identify all actions we can take to increase points of access for reproductive health care in the County and remove barriers to this care.

This the 22nd day of August, 2022.

Brenda A. Howerton, Chair

Wendy Jacobs, Vice-Chair

Nida Allam, Commissioner

Nimasheena Burns, Commissioner

Heidi Carter, Commissioner

