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Opinion: I had an abortion. Here's why Roe v. Wade should not be repealed.

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I write these comments in reaction to the leaked “Politico” article regarding changing or overturning Roe v. Wade and as I do so I wear two hats, one as the president of the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area and one as a concerned woman. The League of Women Voters has long held a position that “public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.” Over the years the League has taken many steps to support and defend these rights and, I think, it will continue to do so.

As a woman, I do understand the serious nature of terminating a pregnancy. I have been in the difficult position of having to do that. Men, and women who have not actually been pregnant and had to make this decision, cannot possibly understand how hard this is. Women are the ones who bear the burden of pregnancy. In no way should a prospective father be excluded from this decision. However, the danger, the burden, the difficulties, in so many ways, lie entirely on the shoulders of the woman.

The fact that 10 states — Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky, Ohio and Mississippi to name a few — have anti-abortion laws that include no exception for rape or incest, with more having trigger laws waiting to go into effect if Roe v. Wade is overturned, makes the possibility of this decision that much more egregious. I would love for any man to be forced to carry to term a pregnancy that resulted from violence let alone violence perpetrated by a family member.

It is inconceivable to me that any caring person would require nine months of agony for any woman just because they themselves would not have an abortion. According to the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 5% of rapes result in the pregnancy of childbearing women ages 12-45. Since approximately 300 out of every 1,000 rapes are reported, the total number of rape-related pregnancies could be higher than thought. I, myself, believe that one woman placed in this difficult position is too many.

The much more dangerous issue surrounding this decision is the potential dismantling of the right to privacy — on which the Roe v. Wade decision was based — for everyone. Just because the first blow has been thrown at what appears to be a single issue, the ramifications of this action could be gargantuan. Once the right to abortion has been removed what will be the next target, the reproductive right to birth control, which became legal through a 1965 Supreme Court decision?

No one has the right to tell me or any woman whether or not to have children. Birth control has been a tremendous benefit to societies all over the world, lifting many populations out of poverty and protecting many children from horrible lives of poverty and neglect.

I find it fascinating that people will scream about the injustice and horror of abortion but will allow children everywhere, including here in America, to live lives deprived of love, adequate care, food, health care and adequate housing. Once again, if you reverse the situations the rules would change. Try passing a law that prohibits vasectomies, the use of Viagra, or better yet, forcing all men to support their illegitimate children or children forgotten through a divorce.

The right to privacy may not be stated in our Constitution but then there are a lot of rights that we enjoy that were not literally there at the writing of the Constitution. The 9th Amendment sets out that just because a right is not listed in the Constitution does not mean that right does not exist. Those justices who feign belief in the “originalist” interpretation of the Constitution should look at their positions on the court and wonder as to their own legal standing. The Constitution initially gave voting rights to white, propertied men only. So where does that leave the rest of us?

If Americans allow the repeal of Roe v. Wade without lobbying Congress for a permanent fix we are headed into a very dark place in terms of the direction of our country, our democracy and the rule of the majority.

No one forces a woman to have an abortion. If you are personally or religiously opposed to an abortion or the use of birth control or having a gun, then don't take part. You are allowed your

right to choose. However, using the law to prohibit my right to choose will result in a rollback in time to the Comstock Laws of 1873 — which were aimed at eliminating obscenity but also outlawed contraception and abortion — and all of the horror that happened during that time.

If you think abortions will end, you are wrong. And the fact that it has been previously argued that “the goal of preventing abortion does not constitute invidiously discriminatory animus (based on gender and gestation) against women” is ridiculous. Pregnant women are the only ones that will be affected by this ruling. Women in America need to become much more cognizant of their voting power and decide to organize. Without that effort, America will just take a huge step backward in time and the grizzly results will rest on all of us, including the current Supreme Court Justices.

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