

Collective Statement from South Carolina Organizations on the Passage of S.1

February 18th, 2021

Columbia, SC: Today, South Carolina has become the latest state to demonstrate its disrespect and disregard for the lives and welfare of its residents by signing into law S.1 – the extreme and dangerous 6-week abortion ban.

In the middle of a raging pandemic that is causing unprecedented loss of life and livelihood, it is appalling that our elected officials have chosen to prioritize taking away health care and human rights from people. They have ignored the voices of countless South Carolinians, doctors, lawyers, business leaders, and faith leaders who have told them just how dangerous this law will be.

While we are outraged, we are undeterred. Our movement is stronger than ever. Over the last several weeks and years, our organizations have helped thousands of people testify, contact their legislators, organize their communities, and learn how to use their voices. There has been an unprecedented wave of engagement by South Carolinians in this legislative process. Our organizations and the communities we represent are united and determined.

No matter what, we will choose people over politics. We will keep working to ensure that the voices of the many – not just the voices of the powerful – are heard and respected at the South Carolina Statehouse.

Organizations

ACLU of South Carolina
League of Women Voters of South Carolina
Make Progress SC
Columbia NOW
Planned Parenthood South Atlantic
SC Equality
SC Progressive Network
South Carolina United for Justice and Equality
The South Carolina Perinatal Association Board
We Are Family
Women's Rights and Empowerment Network

Quotes from Leaders Who Oppose S.1

ACLU of South Carolina Executive Director, Frank Knaack:

"Today our legislature and Governor placed politics in front of the health, safety, and privacy of South Carolinians. They have plowed ahead despite clear warnings that S.1 is unconstitutional and will be challenged in court. They are committing the state to spending precious taxpayer dollars on unnecessary court battles to defend a legally indefensible law. Shame on them."

Co-President, League of Women Voters of South Carolina, Christe McCoy Lawrence:

"The League of Women Voters believes public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices. S.1 would violate that very basic right if it were to go into effect. However, it will not go into effect, just as similar bills in other states have not. Blatantly unconstitutional, it will simply lead to substantial legal costs for the State of South Carolina in an attempt to defend the indefensible."

Co-owners of Make Progress SC, Amber Allen & Jillian Hollingsworth:

"We believe this unconstitutional bill is the culmination of our elected officials' campaign against women and their bodies. Our state has a long history of the same leadership distrusting a woman's ability to make her own choices. It is evident our government needs more female voices in positions of power and leadership. Let the passage of this bill be a rallying cry for women across the state to fight back and fully gain our power."

Planned Parenthood South Atlantic's President and CEO, Jenny Black:

"If South Carolina politicians truly cared about the quality of life for women and children, they would get to work to expedite the vaccine rollout, expand Medicaid, and address the dangerously high rates of maternal mortality and infant mortality in the state," said Jenny Black, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood South Atlantic. "South Carolina maintains some of the starkest health disparities in the country, with Black women dying at four times the rate of white women after they have given birth. Abortion bans disproportionately hurt those that already have the least access to quality health care, including people with low-incomes, people of color, people who are LGBTQ, and those who live in rural areas. If this law is allowed to go into effect, it will pose a serious threat to South Carolinians' health and livelihood."

South Carolina United for Justice and Equality, Phil Ford:

"Queer and Trans people know all too well the real impacts of not having the authority to make decisions about our lives and our bodies. Queer and Trans people access abortion care too, and we deserve to do so legally and safely. But we also know that any government restriction on healthcare, especially personal healthcare decisions like reproductive healthcare, is an attempt to control the minds and bodies of people. With a deadly pandemic upon us, we are shocked that restricting healthcare would receive the attention it has from our leaders. A loss of healthcare for South Carolinians is not what we need. The SC General Assembly should focus on solving the issues we face in respect to COVID-19, hunger, and homelessness, while keeping abortion safe and legal."

The South Carolina Perinatal Association Board President, Cheryl Neuner:

The National Perinatal Association (NPA) and the South Carolina Perinatal Association (SCPA) oppose legislation defining fetal personhood at conception. The time when a fetus becomes a person should be left for medical experts and patients. The NPA and the SCPA oppose any legislation defining fetal personhood at conception and support legislators in favor of leaving this discussion to the medical sphere.

We Are Family Program Director, Cora Webb:

"Time and time again our "representatives" show us what they truly represent: terror, hypocrisy, and ignorance. They have never listened to their constituents and will never listen to their constituents, who are paying them tax dollars to waste all of our time. These same people who work day and night in a pandemic to further limit healthcare access (through S.1) for their constituents have accessible healthcare! The truth is that neither logic or studies nor the experiences, needs, and desires of everyday people will sway them to do better. Therefore, they do not deserve to represent us. These white supremacists and their supporters deserve to be voted out and forgotten. Our state house has always been a breeding ground for racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, homophobia and much more and we need to continue to act to do away with this type of state endorsed violence. "

Women's Rights and Empowerment Network CEO, Ann Warner:

"We are outraged that elected officials have disregarded the will of the people in passing this dangerous and unconstitutional ban. We believe that every person in our state has the capacity to make decisions about pregnancy and parenting for themselves, and we will never stop fighting for their rights to do so. We demand that our lawmakers show us how much they care about our lives by prioritizing bills that will address the real crises in our state, including maternal and infant mortality, inequitable pay practices, unemployment, and poverty."