



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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### **Rep. Taylor and Sen. Erpenbach introduce RESPECT Women Act to Protect and Enhance Women's Health**

MADISON - Today, Representative Chris Taylor (D-Madison) and Senator Jon Erpenbach (D-West Point) joined the Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin, medical professionals, and other reproductive health advocates, to announce the introduction of the RESPECT Women Act. This package of bills establishes a patient's right to receive, and a physician's right to provide, medically accurate information and protects women's ability to make their own personal, private health care decisions.

The RESPECT Women Act includes:

1. **The RESPECT Access to Care Bill** which creates a statutory right for women to obtain a safe, legal abortion according to the principals established in *Roe v. Wade* and subsequent case law. This bill does not create a new legal right, but codifies current federal constitutional protections in Wisconsin law.
2. **The RESPECT Medical Accuracy Bill** ensures the right of all patients to receive honest, medically accurate information from their health care providers and establishes the right of health care providers to provide such information, free from political interference.

As we recognize the 47th anniversary of the landmark decision in *Roe v. Wade*, today the newly configured conservative U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in *June Medical Services, LLC v. Russo*, a case that revisits an abortion restriction requiring hospital admitting privileges that was previously struck down by the Court in the 2016 *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt* decision. Women's reproductive health could be in peril because of the Court's changing composition, creating the urgent necessity to pass the RESPECT Women Act.

Rep. Chris Taylor, Sen. Jon Erpenbach, and advocates for the RESPECT Women Act released the following statements:

"Time and time again, Republican legislators in our state have inserted themselves into the exam room," said Rep. Chris Taylor. "Women in Wisconsin should be able to receive the health care they need, with the medically accurate information all patients expect their health care professionals to provide. This package of bills will put these personal health care decisions back where they should be – between a woman and her doctor."

"The RESPECT Women Act protects Wisconsinites' fundamental right to medically accurate information – between patients and their trusted health care providers and NOT between patients and

politicians,” said Sen. Erpenbach. “Enough is enough, after years of harmful and unnecessary restrictions, it is time we ensure Wisconsinites have access to comprehensive reproductive health care.”

“Since Governor Walker was elected, and a super majority emerged in 2010, we have seen a fever pitch of proposals restricting reproductive health introduced,” said Sara Finger, Founder and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health. “I have watched bill after bill passed while those in power blatantly ignore the science and the evidence presented and disrespect the education and experience of physicians and health professionals.”

“My ability to do my job, and my patients’ right to obtain the health care they need, is undermined when politicians, the vast majority with no medical training, bring their politics into my office,” said Dr. Amanda Schmeihil-Micklos, M.D.

"Today, the U.S. Supreme Court is hearing oral arguments in a case that could determine the future of abortion access both in Wisconsin and across the country,” said Mike Murray, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin. “If *Roe v. Wade* were to be overturned, abortion would immediately become a crime in Wisconsin. It's time for our state lawmakers to step up and support the RESPECT Women Act. This legislation presents a bold, positive vision that protects a woman's ability to make her own health care decisions.”

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