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WAWH Applauds Introduction of the “Respect Women Act”

Legislative Package Would Repeal Harmful Abortion Restrictions, Protect Patients from Political Interference, and Address Harassment and Intimidation at Clinics

Madison, WI — The Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health (WAWH) praised state Rep. Chris Taylor and Sen. Jon Erpenbach today for introducing a new package of bills entitled the “Respect Women Act”, which would repeal Wisconsin abortion restrictions not grounded in medical science, protect a patient’s relationship with her health care provider from political interference, and provide law enforcement with training in order to better prevent and respond to acts of harassment and intimidation at reproductive health care clinics.

“Wisconsin has some of the most extreme restrictions on abortion in the nation, which stand in stark conflict with broad public support among Wisconsin voters for women’s access to abortion care that is informed by medically accurate information and provided in a safe environment,” said Sara Finger, Founder and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health. “It’s time we advance laws that respect, support, and empower women to make the medical decisions that are best for themselves and their families.”

According to a [report](#) from the National Institute for Reproductive Health, in the first six months of this year, 49 states and the District of Columbia have introduced 581 pieces of proactive legislation to advance access to reproductive health care, including abortion. Since 1973, Wisconsin has passed more than [20 laws](#) against abortion, including laws that force physicians to provide women with medically inaccurate or unnecessary information, delay her decision, require tests she doesn’t need, and impose medically unnecessary requirements on consent, reporting, and physician admitting privileges.

“As state legislators and the federal government continue to decimate access to reproductive health care, states like Wisconsin are boldly stepping forward to safeguard their residents’ rights,” said Andrea Miller, president of the National Institute for Reproductive Health. “We applaud the Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health for building critical momentum to advance proactive reproductive health care policies that improve women’s health and lives. Their success demonstrates to the nation the power of state and local advocacy, even in locales that have been traditionally hostile to reproductive rights.”

The Respect Women Act Includes three separate bills with goals to:

- Ensure Wisconsin women have access to comprehensive reproductive health by repealing existing abortion restrictions that are not grounded in medical science or widely accepted medical best practices.
- Ensure all patients receive honest, medically accurate information when seeking health care by stopping the practice of politicians dictating what doctors have to say to their patients.
- Improve law enforcement training regarding effective response and prevention strategies to better address harassment, intimidation and violence that is sometimes directed towards patients and providers at reproductive healthcare facilities.

To learn more, visit <http://www.supportwomenshealth.org/respect-women-act.html>.

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The vision of the Wisconsin Alliance for Women’s Health (WAWH) is an environment in which all Wisconsin women, at every stage and every stage of their life, can realize their optimal health, safety and economic security. Visit www.supportwomenshealth.org.