

*Please include this as part of the written public testimony in support of SF 1, establishing a fundamental right to reproductive health, known as the Protect Reproductive Options (PRO) Act (Chief Author: Senator Jennifer McEwen).*

To Senator Murphy, Chair of the State and Local Government and Veterans Committee, and members of the committee:

I urge you to support SF 1, establishing a fundamental right to reproductive health, known as the Protect Reproductive Options (PRO) Act, including Subdivision 5, regarding local government limitation of fundamental rights.

In 1973, Roe v. Wade was handed down, protecting women's reproductive rights. I was 14 years old.

In June, 2022, after 49 years of federal protection of reproductive rights, Roe v. Wade was overturned and these individual rights were removed. I was 62 years old.

Within 1 month, states had enacted abortion restrictions and by November 2022, officials in Prinsburg, Minnesota had proposed an ordinance allowing lawsuits against abortion providers, which would allow local regulation of fundamental reproductive rights of women. It was unanimously rejected. I was 63 years old. But other attempts at restriction will no doubt follow and this legislation is critical.

Our neighbor, Wisconsin, is operating under a near-total abortion ban, based on an 1849 law. In 1849, women did not have the right to vote and more than 3 million Americans were enslaved. I was minus 110 years old.

It's 2023 and we're in Minnesota. Girls and women are raped and impregnated in all jurisdictions, sometimes by family members. Lethal pregnancy complications occur. Women struggle to make difficult decisions for their health and families in all jurisdictions. They don't whimsically choose to have abortions, much less late term abortions, and Minnesota physicians do not perform infanticide. They provide medically sound and ethical reproductive care to their patients. Local officials and units of government must not be permitted to interfere with reproductive health care and restrict fundamental individual rights.

In 2023, I thank you for prioritizing this critical issue and I urge you to pass SF 1, the PRO Act, to protect reproductive rights in Minnesota and lay critical groundwork to restore and protect reproductive rights across this nation.

Thank you for your time and service.

Sincerely,

Deborah Zvosec

Minneapolis, MN