

To Senator Wiklund, Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, and members of the committee:

Please include this as part of the written public testimony in support of SF 1, Reproductive Health Rights Established for the state of Minnesota, also known as the Protect Reproductive Options (PRO) Act (Chief Author: Senator Jennifer McEwen).

I was 14 years old in June of 1973 when the Roe v. Wade decision was handed down by the United States Supreme Court. Thus, I have lived my full adult life with the right not only to choose if and when to become pregnant - I chose not to - but also with access to the full range of reproductive health care that I, as an American woman, might need. I have lived believing that a nation that respects individual rights and freedoms would continue to provide these protections.

I was 62 years old in June of 2022 as these federal protections were taken from the women (and families) of this nation when the United States Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization decision.

By the time I turned 63 in July of 2022, states across the nation had already enacted restrictions on abortion, including our neighboring state of Wisconsin, which is currently operating under a near-total abortion ban based on legislation passed in 1849, nearly 174 years prior to my birth.

In August of 2022, while door knocking in Cottage Grove, MN, I listened as a young woman, who has also chosen not to have children, wept in fear and despair that she and her husband no longer have the full freedom and protections and access to fundamental health care in this nation that I (and my husband) have had no matter where we chose to live. Protection of women's reproductive rights came up again and again as the issue of top concern in my door knocking conversations with men and women of all ages throughout the summer and fall.

In 2023, we must assure that all citizens of Minnesota have full bodily autonomy and full access to reproductive health care.

Please support SF 1, the PRO Act. It is critical to protect our citizens, to keep Minnesota moving forward, and to lay critical groundwork as we work together across the country to restore and protect full bodily autonomy for all citizens of this nation.

Thank you very much for your time and service.

Sincerely,

Deborah Zvosec
Minneapolis, MN