

March 14, 2023

Rep. Esther Agbaje
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
437 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Sen. Kelly Morrison
95 University Ave W
3205 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Rep. Agbaje and Sen. Morrison:

The Minnesota Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) is writing to thank you for authoring the Reproductive Freedom Defense Act (RFDA) HF366/SF165 which is so incredibly important to protect both the rights of patients and providers when receiving or providing access to reproductive health care for all Minnesotans and those seeking care from outside the state.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v Wade*, many states have not only eliminated the right to abortion care but are also going after patients and health care providers by passing laws that take away personal liberties to gain access to abortion care in states where it is legal. This legislation would provide strong protections for Minnesota's own healthcare providers and citizens against legal attacks and criminal penalties imposed by anti-choice lawmakers and activists in other states.

Physicians take an oath to "do no harm" as part of their medical training. They learn about how to stay up to date, throughout their careers, on the best standards of care for treatment. And they learn about patient privacy and safety, and how patients should have a say in their care based on their values and lived experience.

Our members in other states where abortion care has been banned has put physicians in unethical dilemmas: unable to fulfill their professional obligations to provide care to their pregnant patients because of state laws that forbid it. These laws force physicians to deprioritize the person in front of them and to act in a way that is medically harmful. And often the penalty for not treating their patient could be loss of license and potentially even criminal sanctions.

It is imperative that Minnesota pass Reproductive Freedom Defense Act (RFDA) HF366/SF165 to protect patients and providers from criminal prosecution and lawsuits. This legislation is supported by the majority of Minnesotans to ensure access to the full range of reproductive health care options, including abortion care, free from government interference.

We fully support this bill and thank you again for prioritizing women's health and for protecting our right to treat our patients in an ethical manner. If you have any questions, please reach out to our policy consultant Tara Erickson, at Tara@tgeconsultingmn.com.

Sincerely,

Siri Fiebiger, MD
Minnesota ACOG