



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

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### **Hawaii Attorney General Connors Joins Fellow Attorneys General in Effort to Protect Reproductive Rights**

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general led by Virginia Attorney General Mark R. Herring in filing an amicus brief in *Planned Parenthood South Atlantic v. Wilson* arguing that South Carolina’s “fetal heartbeat” abortion regulations harm women’s healthcare as a whole and a lower court’s ruling blocking the law should be upheld. Additionally, the coalition argues that the collective impact of numerous states across the country enacting restrictive abortion laws, or eliminating access to abortions, harms healthcare nationwide.

“South Carolina’s law is unconstitutional under existing Supreme Court precedent because it effectively bans abortion after six weeks of pregnancy,” Attorney General Clare Connors said. “By joining this amicus brief, we ask the courts to follow longstanding legal authority that prevents devastating health consequences for women.”

In February 2021, South Carolina passed the South Carolina Fetal Heartbeat and Protection from Abortion Act that prohibits abortions upon the detection of an embryonic or fetal heartbeat, effectively banning abortion of a non-viable fetus. Immediately following the passage of the Act, Planned Parenthood South Atlantic filed suit seeking a temporary injunction, which the federal district court granted.

In their amicus brief, the coalition argues that access to safe and legal abortion is an essential component of women’s healthcare and restrictive abortion laws, like the South Carolina Fetal Heartbeat and Protection from Abortion Act, lead to worse health outcomes for women. The coalition also argues that laws banning abortion after the detection of a fetal heartbeat have harmful spillover effects on miscarriage treatment and other healthcare needs.

Additionally, in the amicus brief Attorney General Connors and her colleagues argue that the restrictions the Act places on women also could threaten residents of neighboring states as well as the healthcare systems of those states, explaining, “South Carolina’s restrictive abortion laws will cause its citizens to seek abortion care in

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[neighboring states], potentially straining their healthcare systems.” The coalition further says, “[g]iven that numerous states across the country have enacted similarly restrictive or more restrictive legislation than South Carolina’s Act...[and] [i]f access to safe and lawful abortions were banned in large geographic portions of the country, it would create vast “abortion deserts” in which access to abortion care may be unobtainable for many people due to the obstacles created by the sheer distance from lawful abortion care.”

Joining Attorneys General Connors and Herring in filing today’s amicus brief are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

A copy of the Amicus Brief can be found [here](#).

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