
TODAY

from States Newsroom

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The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the key abortion pill mifepristone for use in 2000. The U.S. Supreme Court will take up a case Tuesday challenging that approval. (Getty Images)

Self-managed abortions rose by more than 26,000 in the six months after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* nearly two years ago, according to a [peer-reviewed study](#) published Monday in JAMA, the American Medical Association's journal.

Researchers determined that an increase of approximately 27,838 online orders of abortion pills between July and December 2022 corresponded to

the findings of an additional 26,055 medication abortions reported outside the formal health care system, the study found.

The *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* ruling in June 2022 overturned the federal right to abortion, returning the decision to the states and leading to [14 with near-total abortion bans](#).

The study was published a day before the nation's highest court is set to hear arguments in a case over the federal approval of [mifepristone](#), one of two drugs used for medication abortions. A decision in favor of an anti-abortion group could limit access to mifepristone, even in states with protective abortion laws.

Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine, an anti-abortion group of physicians, is asking the court to rule that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration should revert to pre-2016 mifepristone regulations. The change would reduce mifepristone's use from 10 weeks gestation to seven, alter the dosage, require three in-person visits, and only allow doctors to provide medication abortions, among other restrictions.

Lawyers for the Biden administration are [urging](#) the court to keep the current regulations on the drug. [Hundreds of studies point to the pill's safety](#). Since the FDA approved mifepristone in [2000](#), 32 deaths have been associated with the drug's use as of December 2022.

Regardless of the outcome, the JAMA research suggests that some people in states with strict abortion bans have found ways to terminate their pregnancies outside of a clinician setting. The number of abortions provided in the formal health care system [declined](#) in the first six months after the *Dobbs* decision, though abortion tallies have since surged.

"Given the increases we've seen and reductions in access, we could make a good guess that a lot of these pills are going to states with those bans," said [Abigail Aiken](#), a University of Texas at Austin public affairs professor and the study's lead author.

Read more at [News from the States](#).

THE BEAT *States Newsroom coverage*

Where do Arizona's congressional Republicans

stand on IVF?

The U.S. House Republican Study Committee released a [budget plan](#) containing dozens of anti-abortion provisions last week. Before it was rejected, the measure proposed giving fetuses “personhood” rights, banning abortion and restricting access to in vitro fertilization. [Arizona Mirror](#) reported that four state Republicans sit on the committee that drafted the proposals: Reps. **Juan Ciscomani**, **Paul Gosar**, **Debbie Lesko** and **David Schweikert**.

Only Ciscomani responded to the Mirror’s requests for comment. He said he supports IVF. “What best reflects my perspectives are the votes I take, bills I introduced, and legislation I co-sponsor,” he said. **Ciscomani**, a **freshman congressman who represents a swing district**, signed on to a non-binding pro-IVF resolution last month after the Alabama Supreme Court issued a ruling that temporarily halted fertility services in the state.

Just one of Arizona’s congressional lawmakers — Democratic Rep. **Greg Stanton** — co-sponsored a bill that would legally protect IVF access across the country. Meanwhile, several Republican lawmakers backed the latest version of the [Life at Conception Act](#), which would declare that life starts from the moment of fertilization. That proposal hasn’t moved since it was introduced last January.

Idaho Democrats urge Republicans to take action on reproductive rights policies

Democrats in Idaho are calling on Republican lawmakers to introduce bills that would stop the exodus of OB-GYNs from the state, widen exceptions to the near-total abortion ban and protect access to IVF. **House Minority Leader Ilana Rubel** said it was “morally incumbent” to push the GOP-controlled legislature to pass reproductive rights measures before the session ends, [Idaho Capital Sun](#) reported Friday.

Idaho only allows abortion if patients are near-death, meaning physicians can be prosecuted for providing abortion care in any other circumstance. Doctors say the law is unclear about when abortions are allowed. A recent [report](#) found that **58 obstetricians left Idaho between**

August 2022 to November 2023, and two hospitals closed their obstetrics programs.

“We could fix this next week if they were willing to do it across the aisle,” Rubel said. “This could be fixed right now. If it is not fixed by the time we (finish the session), then the ballot boxes are where this has to be fixed.”

Democratic Rep. Brooke Green said she worked to come up with pro-IVF legislation in the wake of the Alabama ruling but progress stalled because Republican colleagues saw no need for the law. “I find that really difficult to understand since we’ve moved a bill forward and codified protections against [cannibalism](#),” Green said. “Last time I checked, there was not a threat of cannibalism in Idaho. So certainly we can put forward protections for IVF in Idaho.”

Minnesota conservatives compare surrogacy to slavery

Conservative groups who testified before the Minnesota Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Committee last week compared surrogacy to modern-day slavery. **The groups oppose a bill that would establish a legal framework for surrogacy contracts in the state**, which neither explicitly allows or bans the practice, [Minnesota Reformer](#) reported. Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party Sen. Erin Maye Quade sponsored the legislation.

“On December 6, 1865, the USA ratified the 13th Amendment, which banned slavery in the United States,” said Rebecca Delahunt, director of public policy for the **Minnesota Family Council**, in testimony on Friday. “Yet the Minnesota Legislature is considering a policy in 2024 to regulate the trade of children, opening the door to the legal buying and selling of children through surrogacy. How is it possible to wholeheartedly support the 13th Amendment of the United States but then try to legalize the selling of children to unrelated adults in 2024?”

Patience Griswold, an engagement coordinator with conservative group **Them Before Us**, testified that “surrogacy turns children into commodities to be awarded to the adults with the money and means to acquire them” and that it “creates a class of people who can be sold.” The [Minnesota Catholic Conference](#) used similar language in their written testimony opposing the bill.

A 2015 [review](#) of surrogacy studies found that most surrogacy arrangements are successful and surrogate mothers are “well-motivated and have little difficulty separating children born as a result of the arrangement.” Another study that tracked several dozen families from surrogacy to childrens’ young adulthood found “no differences between assisted reproduction and unassisted conception families in mothers’ or young adults’ psychological well-being, or the quality of family relationships.”

THE PULL *Commentary from Michigan*

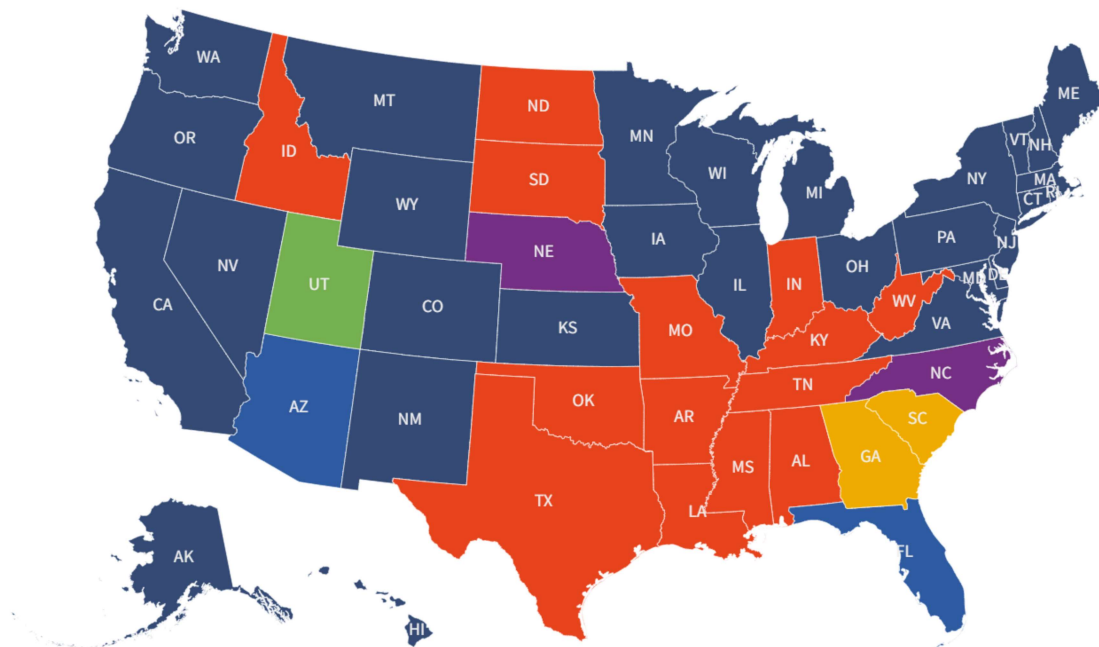
“For years, conservatives have solemnly told us there’s no greater blessing for women facing an unplanned pregnancy than having the child. And now they’re now telling women who want nothing more than to be mothers that they shouldn’t have the right to grow their families if they use surrogacy or IVF.”

— **Susan J. Demas**, editor-in-chief, [Michigan Advance](#)

THE PULSE *Reproductive rights news from across the country*

- States Newsroom reporter Sofia Resnick spoke to NC Newsline editor Rob Schofield about the abortion pill case before the U.S. Supreme Court. ([NC Newsline](#))
- A Mississippi mother is fighting to update a law that blocks children conceived via IVF from receiving inheritance. ([Mississippi Today](#))
- Allyson Ho, a lawyer and wife to James Ho, a judge on the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, has ties to Alliance Defending Freedom, the conservative firm urging the court to restrict mifepristone. ([Guardian](#))
- Three Black reproductive health experts discussed how to navigate birth control misinformation online. ([Capital B](#))

STATE BY STATE *Abortion Access in the US*



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