

## **Massachusetts Leaders Urge Action in Response to Supreme Court Ruling Overturning *Roe v. Wade***

***Reproductive Equity and LGBTQ+ non-profit leaders share outrage over the alarming ruling,  
and urge state action to further safeguard access to abortion and LGBTQ+ protections***

**BOSTON** - In response to Friday's ruling in [Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health](#), in which a majority of U.S. Supreme Court Justices overturned the constitutional right to abortion and raised the possibility of future review of other core liberties, 14 Massachusetts reproductive equity and LGBTQ+ non-profit leaders issued the following joint statement:

"We are outraged to see a majority of Supreme Court Justices strip a vital individual right from the protections in our Constitution. The right to decide if and when to bear a child is fundamental to bodily autonomy and freedom. Overturning the constitutional right to abortion and putting this health care decision in the hands of state legislatures, rather than women and pregnant people, will have devastating consequences for millions of people across the country. Those consequences will fall hardest on people of color, LGBTQ+ people, those who are incarcerated, and those with limited financial resources.

"Friday's ruling alarmingly also signaled the Court's willingness to review other constitutional freedoms that allow us to make informed decisions about our bodies, our lives, and our families. We are united in our commitment to fight for access to abortion, contraception and reproductive freedom, for the right of transgender people to access life-saving healthcare, and for the recognition and protection of our relationships and our families.

"We are grateful that Massachusetts has protected the right to [abortion in state law](#), and that right remains secure in the Commonwealth. But the right to abortion does not mean much if women, trans men, and non-binary people cannot access care. We must go farther. We must do more. This moment demands it. We must take steps to expand access to care so that every person—regardless of their zip code, how much money is in their bank account, or their insurance coverage—is able to access the health care they need.

"The same forces seeking to undermine reproductive freedom are also already and actively working in multiple states to criminalize parents and doctors for providing medically necessary care for transgender youth. This ruling will only embolden those efforts. Our legislators can take action now to ensure that access to essential medical care is protected in Massachusetts by taking steps to protect providers from malicious out-of-state litigation for offering reproductive health care and essential gender affirming care that is legal in our Commonwealth. We urge the state legislature to adopt the measures proposed by the [Massachusetts Beyond Roe](#) agenda and to protect gender affirming care providers to ensure greater healthcare access and equity in our state.

“Justice Clarence Thomas’ suggestion in his concurrence opinion that, ‘In future cases, we should reconsider all of this Court’s substantive due process precedents,’ including *Griswold* (contraception), *Lawrence* (LGBTQ+ intimacy) and *Obergefell* (marriage equality) also underscores the urgency of ensuring that our state laws protect LGBTQ+ families.

“While marriage equality is secure under our Massachusetts state constitution, Massachusetts is the only New England state without core family law protections for LGBTQ+ families and their children. LGBTQ+ parents do not have full protections from the moment of their child’s birth. They face barriers, cost and humiliation to protect their children. They face separation from their children, and they endure losing them to the child welfare system.

“[The Massachusetts Parentage Act](#) is pending legislation currently before the Joint Committee on the Judiciary that will remedy these gaps in our law and protect all children, regardless of the circumstances of their birth or the marital status, gender, or sexual orientation of their parents. We urge our legislators to pass it this session.

“As an extremist majority on the Supreme Court moves to limit rights and put women and LGBTQ+ people in harm’s way, Massachusetts can instead choose to protect the families, health, wellbeing and bodily autonomy of LGBTQ+ people and all people.

“Other legislation pending on Beacon Hill also deserving attention and action include bills that would repeal [archaic anti-sodomy laws](#), [decriminalize consensual sex work and stop the profiling of transgender and low-income women](#), and the [RIGHTS act](#) which would guarantee health, humane treatment, and safety for incarcerated LGBTQ+ people.

“Friday’s decision landed amidst grave and escalating assaults nationwide on many fundamental liberties, from denying reproductive freedom to censoring and surveilling what young people can learn and who they can be in school, to stripping away from parents the basic right to seek life-saving healthcare for their transgender children. We will rally together across all our communities to push back against these attacks across the country, and we will work together to ensure Massachusetts is a place where everyone has the equal protection of our laws and can make informed decisions about our families, our bodies, and our lives.”

Craig Coogan, Executive Director, Boston Gay Men's Chorus

Ellen LaPointe, CEO, Fenway Health

Ellyn Ruthstrom, Executive Director, SpeakOUT Boston

Grace Moreno, CEO, Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce

Grace Sterling Stowell, Executive Director, BAGLY (Boston Alliance of LGBTQ Youth)

Idit Klein, President & CEO, Keshet

Ivan Espinoza-Madrugal, Executive Director, Lawyers for Civil Rights

Janson Wu, Executive Director, GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)

Joan Ilacqua, Executive Director, The History Project

Michael Cox, Executive Director, Black and Pink Massachusetts

Rebecca Hart Holder, Executive Director, Reproductive Equity Now

Tanya Neslusan, Executive Director, MassEquality

Valerie Frias, CEO, Ethos

Whitney Retallic, Executive Director, OUT MetroWest