

## **HB22-XXXX Reproductive Health Equity Act**

*Sponsors: Rep. Meg Froelich, Sen. Julie Gonzales*

Reproductive health care is essential to every individual making their own decisions about what's best for themselves and their family — including whether to get an abortion, in consultation with their health care providers. No one should have their most personal medical decisions controlled by politicians, neighbors, or complete strangers - but that's exactly what's happening across the country.

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**House Bill #** would modernize Colorado statute to protect reproductive rights as fundamental rights. Having access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care including contraception and abortion helps ensure that people can control their own bodies, lives, and futures. This bill would establish that:

- Every individual has the fundamental right to choose or refuse contraception;
- Every individual who becomes pregnant has a fundamental right to choose to continue a pregnancy and give birth or to have an abortion; and
- A fertilized egg, embryo, or fetus does not have independent rights under the laws of the state.

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### **National Context:**

With the Supreme Court taking up not one, but two, direct challenges to *Roe v. Wade* this year, **it has never been more critical that we protect abortion rights for Coloradans** and the region.

As of June 2021, 561 abortion restrictions had been introduced in all but three states<sup>1</sup> and “19 states have enacted 106 restrictions, including 12 abortion bans.”<sup>2</sup> These attempts to restrict reproductive freedom aren't going to stop. Texas' ban has already inspired four other states to introduce copycat legislation.<sup>3</sup>

Colorado is currently ranked “red,” **nearly last in its protections** for abortion access. Colorado has few restrictions on abortion but if *Roe* is weakened/overturned, “state law does not expressly protect abortion.”<sup>4</sup>

Across the country, about 6 in 10 Americans say abortion should be legal in all or most cases<sup>5</sup>.

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### **Colorado Background:**

- During the last election, Coloradans across party and county lines voted to defeat Proposition 115, a ban on abortion later in pregnancy, by 58.99%.
- In 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014, Coloradans overwhelmingly rejected harmful and dehumanizing amendments to the state Constitution attempting to create “fetal personhood” and outlaw abortion.
- The message sent by voters is clear: We trust individuals to make their own reproductive healthcare decisions free from political interference.
- Despite that, 41 pieces of legislation have been introduced since 2010 that would restrict or eliminate abortion access for Coloradans.

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<sup>1</sup> [2021 Is on Track to Become the Most Devastating Antiabortion State Legislative Session in Decades](#)

<sup>2</sup> [For the First Time Ever, U.S. States Enacted More Than 100 Abortion Restrictions in a Single Year](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Lawmakers are racing to mimic the Texas abortion law in their own states. They say the bills will fly through.](#)

<sup>4</sup> [What if Roe fell?](#)

<sup>5</sup> [About six-in-ten Americans say abortion should be legal in all or most cases](#)

**Support for abortion and reproductive health access in Colorado:**

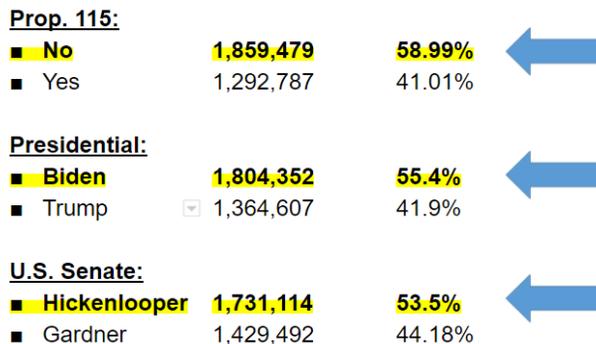
In 2021, COLOR led the first annual Colorado Latino Policy Agenda and heard from over 1,000 Latinos and over 150 Latino community leaders across the state. The data is clear in our findings: <sup>6</sup>

- A majority (66%) support passing laws to protect access to safe abortions and reproductive rights.
- Dems are more likely to support access to safe abortions (74%) but 67% of GOP Latinos do, too.
- A strong majority (85%) of Latino leaders support passing laws to protect access to safe abortions and reproductive rights for state residents.

In 2020, 64% of Coloradans surveyed agreed with the statement “abortion should be legal in all cases or most cases, with some restrictions.”<sup>7</sup>

- Even more (82%) agreed with the statement, “politicians need to stop trying to force their beliefs on women when it comes to abortion.”
- A strong majority (76%) agreed with the statement, “when it comes to ending a pregnancy, a woman should have the power to make decisions about her own body.”

More Coloradans voted against Proposition 115 than voted in Presidential or US Senate races.



Any restrictions or bans upon our reproductive freedoms are out of touch with the electorate and inconsistent with Colorado values of individual freedom, liberty, and self-determination. We know what kind of care we need, and whether it's provided by a clinic or safely and effectively self-managed on our own, with the support of our community, it must be protected.

**It is time to listen to the will of the voters.**

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<sup>6</sup> [Colorado Latino Policy Agenda, Fall 2021](#)

<sup>7</sup> This poll was conducted before the passage of Texas Senate Bill 8