

WAS Statement about human rights and accessing abortion services in the United States of America

The World Association of Sexual Health (WAS) is highly concerned about legal initiatives in the United States that are jeopardizing women's right to accessing safe abortion services, affecting the equality and health of those who may get pregnant, particularly the most marginalized.

Several States, including Texas and Mississippi has passed laws that make it harder for women to access needed sexual and reproductive health care. The burdens imposed by these laws fall hardest on those who already face barriers to health care, especially black, indigenous and other people of color, adolescents, poor and other vulnerable populations.

These laws are in violation of the US constitutional right to abortion established in 1973 (Roe v. Wade, 1973) and international human rights standards related to sexual and reproductive health. WAS is concerned that State Actors of the USA are failing to act in protecting women's health and rights in relation to accessing safe abortion. The impact of these initiatives, the failure of the State to terminate these initiatives and to stop the further development of such legal initiatives is detrimental to people's health and the enjoyment of their sexual and human rights.

Based on the Sexual rights declaration (2014) which states,

The right to equality and non-discrimination (declaration point 1)

The right to autonomy and bodily integrity (declaration point 3))

The right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (declaration point 4)

"The right to privacy" (declaration point 6)

"The right to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual health, with the possibility of pleasurable, satisfying and safe sexual experiences" (declaration point 7)

The right to information (declaration point 9)



“The right to decide whether to have children, the number and spacing of children, and to have the information and the means to do so” (declaration point 12)

The World Association of Sexual Health:

REAFFIRMS that for health, including sexual and reproductive health to be attained and maintained, the rights of all women and those who may get pregnant to access safe abortions services must be respected, protected and fulfilled.

RECALLS the standards of the World Health Organization (WHO) that are calling for the establishment of enabling regulatory and policy environment that is needed to ensure ready access to good-quality abortion services.

RECOGNIZES that people’s access to safe abortion services and the creation of supporting legal environment for accessing safe abortion services is a matter of sexual rights as human rights, the inherent freedom, dignity, and equality and non-discrimination of all human beings and include a commitment to protection from harm.

RECOGNIZES that all types of violence, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, and stigmatization in law and in practice related to the denial of safe abortion services are violations of human rights and impact the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

WAS calls all State actors of the USA, including the Supreme Court and various federal and state courts, to ensure safe and accessible abortion services to all, and to end all legislative and other measures that jeopardizes people’s access to safe abortion services.

WAS is an international organization, that promotes and advocates for sexual health and sexual rights throughout the lifespan and across the world by advancing sexuality research, comprehensive sexuality education, and clinical care and services for everyone.

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