

# NEW YORK'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACT

Imagine a New York that ensures every woman has the right to make the decision that is best for herself, her family, and her future.

Imagine a New York that strengthens the rights of our mothers, our sisters and our daughters. Imagine a New York that is committed to the next generation of women.

## WHAT THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACT DOES

The Reproductive Health Act:

- guarantees a woman's right to control her reproductive health;
- ensures that a woman will be able to have an abortion if her health is endangered;
- treats the regulation of abortion as an issue of public health and medical practice, rather than as a potential crime; and
- guarantees everyone the right to use or refuse contraception.

## WHY WE NEED THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACT

1. New Yorkers overwhelmingly support a woman's right to decide when and whether to have a child. In fact, three-quarters of New York voters support the Reproductive Health Act—even after hearing arguments against the bill.\*
2. New York's law is outdated and inadequate. After almost 40 years, times have changed but our state law still regulates abortion in the criminal code and lacks protections if a woman's health is endangered.
3. New York is not secure in relying on the federal protections provided by *Roe*. State legislatures across the country have enacted over 450 bills that would ban or restrict abortion, some of which are a direct challenge to *Roe v. Wade*. All it takes is one of these challenges to reach the Supreme Court, and *Roe* could be overturned.
4. Seven states have already passed laws like the Reproductive Health Act. New York needs to reclaim our rightful place as a pro-choice leader by passing this bill.
5. The majority of voters would vote for a candidate who supports this bill.\* It's time for the New York State Legislature to listen to constituent voices and support the Reproductive Health Act.

\* NARAL Pro-Choice New York commissioned Global Strategy Group to conduct a survey of registered voters in New York State. The margin of error on the overall sample is +/-3.5%.



**That New York is possible if we pass the Reproductive Health Act.**

We must act now to uphold our state's strong legacy of protecting women's health.

Special thanks to Jennifer Baumgardner for her assistance and to the "I Had an Abortion" Project.

## JANICE TENNANT, VOTER



Too many states are placing restrictions on reproductive rights; I'm proud that New York is going in the opposite direction and standing up for women's health.

As a New York voter, I support the Reproductive Health Act. I strongly believe that each woman has the right to make for herself the private and personal decision about when and whether to have a child.

## REVEREND CARLTON VEAZEY, CLERGY MEMBER



As a matter of faith, we support the right of all women to have the full range of information about and access to all their reproductive health options and the ability to make these very personal decisions based on their own ethical or religious beliefs, free from government interference. Women's health advocates, religious leaders, and people of faith need to stand together to protect a woman's right to services and allow her to follow her own conscience.

## MAUREEN PAUL, DOCTOR



When I am caring for a woman, I need to be able to use my best medical judgment to treat her, not have my hands tied. As a doctor, I took a solemn oath to protect the health and safety of my patients. But the federal government has placed increasing restrictions on a woman's right to have an abortion—even if her health is in danger. New York State needs to act now to protect women, and doctors, by making sure a woman is able to have an abortion if her health is endangered at any point in pregnancy.

# WOMEN'S STORIES

Women make reproductive decisions—including abortion, adoption or having a child—for many different reasons. While people may disagree with some of those reasons, it is important that each woman be able to make the decision that is right for her, her circumstances and her family. The Reproductive Health Act will ensure that New York State continues to stand up for a woman's ability to make her own private, personal decision.

## MARION BANZHAF

When I got pregnant my freshman year of college, it was 1971. I knew I wasn't ready to have a child, but I was in Florida where abortion was not yet legal, and it was also illegal to print any information about abortion. Since Roe was not yet the law of the land, one of the only places where you could get a legal abortion was New York. New York was at the forefront of protecting women's rights when I needed help. Our state needs to once again take the lead when it comes to ensuring reproductive justice.



## ILENE JAROSLAW

When I became pregnant with my third child, everything looked good in early tests. About 17 weeks into my pregnancy, however, a sonogram showed that part of my baby's brain was missing and she or he would not survive. Because of previous health complications, an abortion was the only option to protect my health and fertility. I think it's important to talk about this because while abortion should be a personal decision, politicians try to interfere. I can't imagine what my family and I would have gone through if abortion weren't safe and legal.



## MORGAN COUSINS

I was surprised when I found out I was pregnant. It was a humbling moment that challenged everything I thought I knew about who I am. After talking with close friends and family, I decided that who I am could also include being a mother. My decision to continue my pregnancy was not easy to make. I knew that any decision I could have made at that point was going to change my life. The fact is, my decision is more meaningful because I had the choice. It is simply a human right to choose what your path in life should look like. I couldn't imagine living in a world where I had no choice at all.

