

# public affairs update

## Supreme Court Upholds Abortion Ban

On April 18, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a 5-4 decision upholding the Federal Abortion Ban in the cases of *Gonzales v. Planned Parenthood* and *Gonzales v. Carhart*. Planned Parenthood condemned the ruling in the first ever federal ban on an abortion method without an exception for women's health.

With Bush appointees John Roberts and Samuel Alito leading the way, a 5-4 majority turned its back on more than 30 years of Supreme Court decisions that protected women's health from dangerous laws that restrict abortion.

This federal abortion ban began as a law passed by Congress and was signed by President Bush in 2003. It criminalizes abortions in the second trimester of pregnancy -- that doctors say are safe and the best to protect women's health. Upholding this dangerous ban tells women that politicians, not doctors, will make their health care decisions for them.

This stunning decision, which defies both common sense and established law, firmly places politicians and the Supreme Court into the middle of private health care decisions. This ruling is a serious setback for women's health and reproductive freedom. It also sets a dangerous precedent for political intrusion into Americans' private decisions about medical care.

## What can YOU do about the Supreme Court decision?

Planned Parenthood is moving forward to protect women's health and safety on multiple fronts and we need your help NOW. Sign the Planned Parenthood pledge to make sure the Supreme Court's reckless decision doesn't result in federal or state laws that take away women's rights or threaten women's health and safety.

Planned Parenthood is also calling on Congress to pass the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA). FOCA would codify in federal law the protections for a woman's right to choose as outlined in *Roe v. Wade* and would invalidate existing and future laws that interfere with or discriminate against the exercise of the rights protected. It is essential that the federal government protect women's health. Please contact your U.S. Representative and ask them to support the Freedom of Choice Act.

To take action, contact the Public Affairs Department at 215.351.5510.

call 215.351.5510  
visit [www.ppsp.org](http://www.ppsp.org)

# public affairs update, cont.

## Abortion around the globe

On April 24, the Mexico City legislature approved a bill to make abortion legal in the first three months of pregnancy. This new law applies to city-run hospitals in Mexico City, but would not require doctors in federal hospitals or private clinics to perform abortions. However, it opens the way for private clinics to perform abortions.

Mexico City Mayor Marcelo Ebrard supports the law and said doctors at city-run hospitals cannot refuse to perform abortions based on personal or moral objection. Outside Mexico City, abortion is only allowed in cases of rape, severe fetal defects or if the woman's life is at risk. The only Latin American countries with legal abortion are Cuba and Guyana. Mexico City's new law will likely influence policies and health practices across Mexico and other parts of heavily Roman Catholic Latin America.

The church has vowed to continue its anti-abortion campaign even though it is under investigation for possibly violating Mexican laws forbidding religious authorities from participating in politics, according to the Washington Post.

*Interested in learning more about abortion in other countries?* On Monday, May 21, take a different kind of lunch break and join PPSP for a screening of *Like a Ship in the Night*, an award-winning documentary that chronicles the stories of three Irish women who must secretly travel to England to obtain legal abortions.

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## Upcoming Events: Mark your Calendars!

- Primary ELECTION DAY: Polls open from 7am to 8pm  
Tuesday, May 15th - [www.ppspvotes.org](http://www.ppspvotes.org) for more information
- Volunteer Night at PPSP, 1144 Locust Street  
Wednesday, May 16th - 5:00-7:30pm
- Lobby Day: Pennsylvania goes to Washington D.C.  
Thursday, May 17th - All day trip  
Reserve your seat on the bus: call 215.351.5585!
- Brown Bag Lunch at PPSP, 1144 Locust Street  
Monday, May 21st - 12:00-1:30pm  
*Like a Ship in the Night*, documentary about illegal abortion in Ireland
- Activist Training at PPSP, 1144 Locust Street  
Tuesday, May 22nd - 5:30-8:30pm

To RSVP or for information about these or other PPSP events, contact the Public Affairs Department at [publicaffairs@ppsp.org](mailto:publicaffairs@ppsp.org) or (215) 351-5585.