

# Why leaked abortion opinion is “antithetical to public health”

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**What's the news:** In light of a leaked draft Supreme Court opinion that would overturn the abortion rights protected by *Roe v. Wade* and other precedents, the AMA is profoundly worried about the impact on reproductive health in the United States if the high court ultimately rules in that fashion.

The AMA is “deeply concerned by the contents and implications of the draft Supreme Court opinion for the *Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization* case that became public this week,” said AMA President Gerald E. Harmon, MD.

“This opinion would lead to government interference in the patient-physician relationship, dangerous intrusion into the practice of medicine and potentially criminalizing care,” added Dr. Harmon, a family physician in South Carolina.

**Why it's important:** The AMA and more than two dozen leading medical organizations filed an amicus brief (PDF) with the high court, explaining to the justices that “abortion is safe medical care” and rightfully “a decision to be made between the patient and the physician, subject to the physician's clinical judgment and the patient's informed consent,” Dr. Harmon said.

Studies have found that women are more likely to self-induce abortions when they face barriers to reproductive services and those who are forced to carry a pregnancy to term face “an outcome with significantly greater risk to maternal health and mortality,” notes the medical organizations' brief.

“With deliberations underway, we strongly urge the Court to reject the premise of the draft opinion and affirm precedent that allows patients to receive the critical reproductive health care that they need,” Dr. Harmon said. “Allowing the lawmakers of Mississippi or any other state to substitute their own views for a physician's expert medical judgment puts patients at risk and is antithetical to public health and sound medical practice.”

Read Dr. Harmon's AMA Leadership Viewpoints column from last fall on why this unconstitutional attack on reproductive health must not stand.



**Learn more:** The medical organizations' brief supports the Jackson Women's Health Organization and others who have challenged Mississippi's law. It urges the court to affirm the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision that upheld a district court ruling that case law does not allow states to ban abortions before a fetus is viable.

Read more about why the high court must reject Mississippi's arbitrary, intrusive law, and explore guidance from the *AMA Code of Medical Ethics* on genetics and reproductive medicine.