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Florida House Democrats on 15-Week Abortion Ban Law

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Floridians’ freedom to make important decisions about their reproductive health care was diminished this morning after the Governor signed House Bill 5, the 15-week abortion ban. This restrictive bill does not include common sense exemptions for victims of human trafficking, incest, or rape.

Members of the Florida House Democratic Caucus issued the following statements:

“Politicians have no business getting between a patient and her doctor. This 15-week abortion ban takes away every woman’s right to make personal decisions that should only be made by themselves, with their family, their doctor, and their faith. Not only is this unconstitutional and infringes on personal freedom, it also isn’t our place as elected officials to mandate choices women must make about their health. This new law is gross government overreach dictating the choices and free will of Floridians. Floridians don’t need this kind of governmental interference into their freedom to make choices about their bodies,” said **Leader Evan Jenne (D-Hollywood)**.

“Governor Ron DeSantis brags about Florida being the ‘freest state’ in the nation, and yet today he signed a bill to strip away the freedoms of women. There is no such thing as a ‘reasonable’ or ‘generous’ abortion ban, as many Republican politicians want you to believe. Instead HB 5 is a part of a national agenda to completely ban abortion and contraception. Despite these extreme attacks we will not falter or lose hope — the people of Florida need us to fight back and that’s exactly what we intend to do,” said **Representative Anna V. Eskamani (D-Orlando)**.

“Women across the state of Florida expected this day to come. This egregious law takes away a woman’s right to make personal decisions about her body and her health. As a mother of two daughters, and a woman who was faced with the painful choice of terminating a much-wanted pregnancy due to fetal abnormalities, it is unconscionable that women no longer have the right to make personal decisions about their families and bodies. It should be noted that the earliest an amniocentesis can be performed is at 16 weeks and a fetal anatomy scan is performed at 18 weeks.

This 15-week abortion ban takes the decision-making process away from women and their families. This draconian law has no exceptions for rape and incest. It's a sad day for women," said **Representative Robin Bartleman (D-Weston)**.

"By signing HB 5, the Governor is moving Florida into a dangerous zone of government overreach - because the truth is that none of us ever actually knows what challenges a person may face during their pregnancy and because this extreme abortion ban does not provide for any exceptions for women who may become pregnant through no choice of their own by rape, incest, or human trafficking. As a government, we must give people the space, dignity, and freedom to make these intensely difficult, personal decisions for themselves and their loved ones. The Governor is out of touch with what Floridians really want, which are policies that balance both the potential life of the unborn child and the life of the mother, not extreme bills that substitute the judgment of politicians in place of the wisdom of the Floridians who have to live with the consequences of these decisions being taken out of their own hands," added **Representative Fentrice Driskell (D-Tampa)**.

"The Florida GOP's refusal to include exceptions for rape, incest, and human trafficking in HB 5 is a glaring indicator of just how much they are willing to prioritize partisan politics over people. Excluding common sense and humane exceptions for victims impregnated against their will demonstrates how little the GOP actually cares about life, women and freedom. Instead of considering the implications under basic human rights law and norms, the GOP is more focused on adding yet another state law to set up a legal challenge to Supreme Court precedent - regardless of how many women and families are caught in the political crossfire. Every Floridian should have the right to be healthy, prosperous, and safe - this new law directly undermines that freedom," said **Representative Dotie Joseph (D-North Miami)**.

"We knew when HB5 was passed in our legislature, Governor DeSantis would sign it. That unfortunate day is here as some of our so-called leaders continue trying to make this unconstitutional bill a reality. Our tax payers' dollars are being spent on this Governor's grandstanding and political ambitions for a higher office. Republicans have been the majority party in Florida for two decades now, and Florida families are struggling more than ever to pay for housing, food, and childcare, but instead of focusing on finding solutions, they are finding ways to hurt families more with bills like this abortion ban. Abortion is healthcare and a constitutional right. This is another setback for our democracy, but I will continue to work to make sure that it is brief and temporary," said **Representative Michele Rayner (D-St. Petersburg)**.

"A woman's health, not political agendas, should drive her medical decisions. It's not lost on me that the Governor is signing this extreme abortion ban during Black Maternal Health Week. He clearly does not care that Black women face much higher maternal mortality rates than other women due to factors like lower quality of care and discrimination. What is also disturbing are the lack of exceptions for rape, incest, or human trafficking, forcing birth and added trauma. Partisan political ambition has gotten between patients and their doctors, their families, and their faith. It's barbaric," said **Representative Tracie Davis (D-Jacksonville)**.

“Family planning and women’s health critical to family planning should not be dictated by politicians as government has no business in these matters. The very personal and private decision of a couple about when to start their families and under what circumstances should rest with them, their doctors and with their faith. The legislation signed today cruelly overlooks victims of rape and incest, and allows no exceptions for women whose pregnancies have gone woefully wrong and become life threatening. This government interference into the personal lives of Floridians should have no place in our state,” said **Representative Allison Tant (D-Tallahassee)**.

“As a recent father of a newborn baby girl, HB 5 is sickening to my stomach. The insensitivity toward victims of rape and incest are historically inhumane. It is my prayer, for my baby girl and all of the other women of the state of Florida, that the courts will put a stop to this horrendous bill. This is a sad day for the state of Florida,” said **Representative Kevin Chambliss (D-Homestead)**.

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