



Legislative Testimony
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**Written Testimony on Senate Resolution 42, A Resolution Proposing a
State Constitutional Amendment Concerning a Right to Privacy**

Senator Flexer, Representative Blumenthal, Ranking Members Sampson and Mastrofrancesco, and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

My name is Jess Zaccagnino, and I am the policy counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am writing to testify on Senate Resolution 42, A Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment Concerning a Right to Privacy.

Access to abortion and contraception is not just about its legality, but it is also about humanity, dignity, and freedom. As the U.S. Supreme Court has turned its back on nearly fifty years of precedent on the right to privacy, a lack of access to reproductive health services, including abortion, is already threatening people's lives and futures across the country. People across the country have been forced to remain pregnant against their will, endangering their mental and physical health, their lives and futures, and their family's lives and futures. Because of systemic racism, we know that those hurt first and worst by these attempts are Black and Latinx people, and those who are low income. The promise of *Roe* has never been a reality for everyone in this country, and in the past year, in many places, that promise has been gutted entirely.

Although Connecticut has been a leader in reproductive freedom, for many people the right to an abortion is in name only because of limited access to abortion care. Across the country and in Connecticut, economic injustice, systemic racism, documentation

status, targeted restrictions of abortion providers, and the criminalization of pregnancy outcomes have kept abortion access out of reach for people of color, young people, LGBTQ+ people, and lower-income people. Last year was a record-breaking year for the number of anti-abortion restrictions raised and enacted across the country.¹

Connecticut must act quickly to dismantle barriers to reproductive freedom and ensure that abortion is accessible, affordable, and available to all. Everyone deserves access to reproductive care in their community, on the timeline they choose, and by the provider they trust. The ACLU-CT believes in a future where everyone can make decisions about pregnancy and parenting that are the best for them, which includes access to safe, legal, and affordable abortion. As politicians across the country deny our freedom and obstruct access to reproductive care, the ACLU-CT is grateful to this Committee for prioritizing access for our state's residents. The ACLU-CT strongly supports measures that protect reproductive freedom and urges this Committee to do the same.

¹ See, e.g., Megan Rose, *Here's What States Are Doing to Abortion Rights in 2023*, PROPUBLICA (Feb. 8, 2023), <https://www.propublica.org/article/us-abortion-legislation-2023>.