



Trust Black Women - Talking Points

As we strive to be more inclusive in reproductive justice, our language is always evolving, so we use many terms to capture the various identities that we may occupy. Some of these terms include:

- **Birthing people** - referring to all people who are able to give birth regardless of their gender identity
- **Pregnant people** - referring to people who are currently pregnant regardless of gender identity
- **Mammas** - referring to people who take care of children regardless of gender
- **Women** - referring to people who identifies as women

Values

Our vision for abortion justice is grounded in radical liberation, including racial, economic, and immigrant justice. We envision a world where each of us can live, work, and make decisions about our health with dignity.¹

- Trust Black Women - Period
- Equity & Justice

Messaging Note:

- It's important to name who are behind the abortion restrictions. It reinforces that they are people who are driving the restrictions.
- There are several numbers/facts in this document. As much as possible use social math (7 out of 10).

¹ Sourced from All Above All*

- People are visual and remember stories. As much as we can weave stories and create visual to help people remember the impact of the abortion restrictions.

Trust Black Women

We know that night is the darkest just before dawn. Black women have been at the forefront fighting for freedom from Slavery to Selma to the Supreme Court.

- Black liberation was never vested in the court system. We know that our freedom depends on dismantling systemic misogyny, sexual violence, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy. Historically we have won when we trust Black women.
- Black women have fought for Reproductive Justice² because we know that abortion access is more than **Roe**.
- Black women are navigating the very real issues of lack of access to quality healthcare, absence of job opportunities, racism, rising cost of childcare, paid family leave, inadequate access to healthy food and clean water as well as many other intersectional issues when determining if and when to have children. We need to trust Black women to make the best decisions for ourselves and our families.
- We believe that all women regardless of income or location should be able to access the pregnancy care she chooses free from coercion or shame in her own community.
- Audre Lorde said, *“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”* Abortion access, reproductive justice, racial justice, gender equity—these are not separate issues. They are intersecting issues that collectively determine the quality of lives and whether we can thrive.³
- Trust us and we will lead.

Supreme Court

Abortion care is still legal. The leak did not make any changes to current rights protected by Roe. However, should the Supreme Court leak become a final ruling it would have devastating and dangerous implications for other rights including access to contraception, same sex and interracial marriage, affirmative action and voting rights.

- This opinion, if held up, would rip away a fundamental right women and pregnant people have had for the last 49 years.

² Reproductive Justice exists when we have the human right to bodily autonomy including the right to control our sexuality, our gender, our work, and our reproduction. That right can only be achieved when all women and girls have the complete economic, social, and political power and resources to make healthy decisions about our bodies, our families and our communities in all areas of our lives. Coined by Black women in 1994.

³ Sourced from the pissed off peaches

- 56% of Black people in America live in the south. Many of the roll backs in abortion rights are in southern states - disproportionately impacting Black women.
- Of the 13 states that have trigger bans, several of the states including Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi have high percentage populations of Black women and birthing people who will be impacted by the laws.
- If the court reverse Roe, within months we can see almost half the States in the Country (26) ban or severely restrict abortion access. This includes states that have high populations of Black people: Texas, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana to name a few.
- There has been over 500 pieces of legislation introduced this year to restrict abortion.

Black Women and Families and Health

These abortion restrictions are dangerous. The United States has the second highest maternal death rate among developed countries, and for Black women, we are 3 to 4 times more likely to experience a pregnancy related death than white women.

- Forcing women to carry unwanted pregnancies will have deadly consequences. The banning of abortions nationwide could lead to a 33% increase in the number of pregnancy-related deaths among Black birthing persons.⁴
- In the 1960s before **Roe** was the law of the land, 17% of pregnancy related deaths where due to illegal abortions. Women of color were 12 times more likely to die from illegal abortions.⁵
- Access to the full spectrum of reproductive and sexual health care, including abortion is critical to our community as Black birthing people. Not only should we be able to decide whether or not to continue a pregnancy, but we should also enjoy access to the care and resources that support us in doing so.
- The single greatest contributor to persistent poverty among Black women is an unplanned pregnancy.
- The opponents of abortion are not interested in supporting public policies that improve women's lives. Their opposition to government safety nets, access to contraception and parental leave clearly indicates that supporting the wellbeing of Black women and our families are not a part of their agenda.
- The vast majority (59%) of women seeking abortions are already mothers.

Criminalization

⁴ <https://www.colorado.edu/today/2021/09/08/study-banning-abortion-would-boost-maternal-mortality-double-digits>

⁵ Guttmacher

This decision could not only remove all access to abortion for many Black women, it also leaves the door open for criminalization of doctors, providers, women and their systems of care.

- Black people are surveilled, policed and criminalized at higher rates than other communities. We know that banning abortion will have a disproportionate impact on the criminalization of Black bodies and our pregnancy outcomes.
- We know that banning abortion doesn't stop the need for abortions. Restricting abortion access can have severe legal consequences, including the criminalization of Black women for both seeking abortions as well as pregnancy lost.

Abortion Access | Voting | Black Women

Let's be clear: our opponents are **not** just opposed to abortion. The same people who are targeting our right to vote, banning books by Black authors in schools, passing anti trans and anti gay legislation are the same people behind abortion restrictions.

- It's important to call out that our rights are being hijacked by mostly conservative white men who want to return America to antebellum days where they had all the power.
- If we look at the states that have seen deep restrictions in voting access, they match up almost perfectly with states that are rolling back access to abortions.
- Our rights are not just disappearing into thin air, Republicans like Mitch McConnell are using our bodies as political pawns in their quest for power.

Black people overwhelming support access to abortion. The majority (80%) of Black people believe abortion should “remain legal and women should be able to get safe abortions.”

- 64% of Black women who self identify as religious (attend religious service at least once a week) believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases.
- Three-quarters (76%) of Black people agree that health insurance should cover abortion care.⁶
- 91% of Black people say that a woman's ability to control whether or when she has children is an important part of financial stability for herself and her family
- 74% of Black voters believe abortion is an important voting issue
- 79% of Black voters oppose their state passing new laws that severely restrict abortion,

⁶ Black Reproductive Justice Policy Agenda p.15

- Over 70% of Black women believe abortion should be legal in most or all cases.
- Almost 7 in 10 Black voters (69%) would not vote for a candidate that would overturn Roe.

Next Steps CTA's

Call To Actions

- Join conversation with SisterSong WOC meeting on Monday, May 9, 2022 at 2:00 pm ET.
- PPFA Actions in major cities on May 14, 2022.
- Contact your local Reproductive Justice organizations and ask them how you can help them protect Black women.
- Donate to local and national reproductive justice organizations.
 - [ARC SE AFIYA](#), [BFF](#), [BWWAP](#), [In Our Own Voice](#), [SisterReach](#), [SisterLove](#), [SisterSong](#), [WWAV](#)
- Identify yourself as someone safe to hear abortion stories in church, in your family
- [Share your abortion story](#)
- Use the hashtag #trustblackwomen

Background

Abortion access is under attack in the United States, with a major case ***Dobbs v. Jackson*** set to be decided this summer. Despite a recent leak of a draft brief in the case, abortion is still legal in the United States. Many states are passing abortion bans and others have “trigger laws” banning abortion that will become law if Roe is overturned. These bans make obtaining a clinical abortion more difficult, often by imposing, mandatory waiting periods, criminalizing abortion providers, restricting abortion access to before most women know that they are pregnant and even requiring medically unnecessary testing to be done. This year, there has been over 500 restrictions on abortion introduced.