

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

PROCLAMATION NO. 2024-017

Proclaiming March 10, 2024 as Abortion Provider Appreciation Day in Multnomah County, Oregon.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- A. On March 10, 1993, Dr. David Gunn was shot and killed by a white supremacist anti-abortion extremist in the first known instance of the murder of an abortion Provider.
- B. Beginning in 1996, March 10th was established as Abortion Providers Appreciation Day, a day to honor Dr. Gunn's legacy and to celebrate the resilience and commitment of those who continue to provide abortion care. This day of appreciation honors abortion providers – including clinic administrators, patient advocates, counselors, security personnel, medical assistants, nurses, advanced practice clinicians, physicians and others – who provide essential health care with courage, compassion and dedication.
- C. The decision about whether and when to become a parent is one of the most important life decisions a person can make, and abortion providers must be accessible in order for people to make real decisions about their bodies, lives and futures.
- D. Abortion providers and clinic staff help to ensure that all women, trans men, gender-non-binary and all other people who can become pregnant can make their own decisions about their bodies and their pregnancies, and support their patients' decisions by treating them with dignity, compassion and respect.

- E. Abortion clinics and providers have historically been targeted with acts of violence and vandalism perpetrated by anti-abortion extremists. The National Abortion Federation's 2022 statistics on violence and disruption against abortion providers shows that acts aimed at disrupting services, harassing providers and blocking patients' access to abortion care have continued to rise significantly in the wake of the fall of *Roe v. Wade*, especially in protective states after dozens of clinics were forced to close in states that banned abortion. Clinics in protective states saw a disproportionate increase in violence and disruption in the past year, with stalking increasing by 913%, obstructions by 538%, bomb threats by 133%, burglaries increase by 100% and assaults and batteries by 29%¹.
- F. In Multnomah County, despite continuing affirmation of our community's values around reproductive choice and freedom, our providers have been subject to harassment and protest that disrupts patient care, burdens clinics and stigmatizes providers and those that they serve.
- G. On June 9, 2022 the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution Protecting Access to Reproductive Freedoms and Reproductive Health. The Resolution reaffirmed Multnomah County's commitment to advancing reproductive freedom and access to reproductive health, and resolved to consider immediate legislative action if reproductive freedoms were to be weakened or overturned at the federal or state level.
- H. On June 24, 2022 the Supreme Court of the United States issued its ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, overturning the constitutional protections for abortion set in *Roe v. Wade*. This decision has continued to have deep rippling effects, even in states where abortion is more accessible. Since the *Dobbs* decision, twenty states have moved to ban or restrict abortion and 25 have measures in place to protect abortion rights. Oregon stands alone with Vermont as the most protective states in the country.²
- I. Since the *Dobbs* decision, Oregon has seen a significant uptick in abortions, with a report from the Society of Family Planning estimating that 8,880 abortions were performed in Oregon from July 2022 to March 2023³. Oregon created a \$15 million fund last year to expand abortion services across the state. Yet despite continued state investment in abortion funds and patient support needs like travel

¹ "2022 Violence and Disruption Statistics". *National Abortion Federation*.
<https://prochoice.org/our-work/provider-security/>

² "Abortion Policy in the Absence of Roe." *Guttmacher Institute*.
<https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/abortion-policy-absence-roe>

³ "#WeCount Report." *Society of Family Planning*. <https://doi.org/10.46621/UKAI6324>

and lodging⁴, and federal commitments to protect individuals' rights to travel to receive abortion care⁵, patients and providers still face significant barriers and uncertainty about the personal and professional risks associated with abortion care.

- J. The changing legal and political landscape for abortion care providers deepens the risks that accompany this work. Recognizing these risks, in January 2023, Oregon's Attorney General launched a new Reproductive Rights Hotline that provides free legal advice on Oregon's reproductive health laws, including issues related to abortion access.
- K. The most recent data available from 2022 indicates that more than a quarter of the abortion procedures in Oregon happen in Multnomah County⁶. As accessing care becomes more challenging across the country, it is essential to protect abortion care in Oregon and especially in Multnomah County. In order to protect abortion care, we must protect and support providers.
- L. Abortion providers in Multnomah County and clinic staff courageously provide care in the face of these restrictions, political interference and threats to their personal safety.
- M. Abortion providers and the clinic staff who support them and their patients are an essential and valued part of the continuum of healthcare in Multnomah County, providing quality, compassionate, and necessary healthcare to county residents and to those who travel here for care.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:

1. March 10 to be Abortion Provider Appreciation Day in Multnomah County.

⁴ House Bill 5202-A (2022)

⁵ "Executive Order on Securing Access to Reproductive and Other Healthcare Services."

⁶ "Abortions by month of occurrence and county of residence"

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/birthdeathcertificates/vitalstatistics/pages/induced-abortion-data.aspx>

2. We thank and support the many abortion providers in Multnomah County including the OHSU Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Center for Women's Health, Lilith Clinic, and Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette, are committed to ensuring their safety and continued operation in Multnomah County, and welcome patients traveling to Multnomah County to access the abortion care they need.

ADOPTED this 14th day of March, 2024.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Jessica Vega Pederson, County Chair

REVIEWED:

JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By _____
Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY: Chair Jessica Vega Pederson