

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan Partner Guidance Texas SB 8 / Abortion Bans Talking Points

*Hello and thank you for joining the fight to protect abortion access. The following talking points are intended to inform partner messaging, **but please do not copy them word for word**. This guidance is being shared widely, so we recommend that you adjust to fit your unique voice.*

[THE SITUATION]

The Supreme Court allowed Texas's unconstitutional six-week abortion ban to go into effect.

- This is unprecedented. This law empowers vigilante bounty hunters and incentivizes them to surveil and harass people.
- Under SB8, people who help or intend to help someone get an abortion after six weeks in Texas could be sued by a neighbor, distant relative, abusive partner, or even a stranger from out of state — and collect \$10,000 for each successful claim.
- Six weeks is before many people know they're pregnant. Most people won't even have a positive pregnancy test until four or five weeks gestation — or one to two weeks after missing a menstrual cycle. And that's assuming their menstrual cycle is consistent.
- That means to get an abortion they have a week, maybe two at best, to suspect they may be pregnant; confirm that they are in fact pregnant; make an appointment; have an ultrasound; wait 24 hours; and then have a second appointment with the same provider to comply with Texas law.

Right now, abortion is virtually inaccessible for patients across Texas.

- Most Texans are now unable to access abortion unless they can afford to travel hundreds of miles out of state, take time off work, and arrange child care and transportation. For some, cost is just one barrier; immigration status and checkpoint concerns may also inhibit travel.
- Many Black, Latino and Indigenous people, those with low incomes, and people in rural areas face the greatest barriers to abortion access.
- In Texas, like many states, a legacy of systemic racism has trapped Black women and Latinas in poverty at disproportionately high rates, and they likely will be most harmed by this ban.

- This law has isolated people seeking abortion — targeting their entire support network and discouraging their loved ones from helping them for fear of being sued. Patients may be scared to have an open conversation about their decision to have an abortion for fear of putting a loved one or other trusted person in legal jeopardy.
- This is a travesty for the nearly 7 million women of reproductive age in Texas, and everyone who supports access to safe, legal abortion.

[THE BIGGER PICTURE]

This Texas law sets a dangerous legal precedent and could clear a path for states to override people’s constitutional rights.

- If the courts let this bill stand we can expect to see similar bills introduced in states across the country—including Michigan.
- The Supreme Court is hearing a Mississippi case on December 1 that could render *Roe v. Wade* meaningless. (*The decision would not come until summer 2022*)
- Here in Michigan, we face an especially dangerous threat.
 - Michigan has a pre-Roe ban on the books. **If SCOTUS overturns *Roe v Wade*, access to abortion in Michigan would be in danger.**
 - Michiganders could lose the right to control their own bodies and decide if, when and how to become a parent.
 - Access to safe, legal abortion would be threatened.
 - The only way to guarantee people in Michigan can continue to access safe, legal abortion is to **pass legislation like the Reproductive Health Act.**

[OUR VALUES]

- Everyone should have the freedom and power to control their own body, decisions, and lives. When a few people in power can impose their beliefs on everyone, we aren’t truly free.
- Every person should be able to make their own decisions about their health and their bodies — including abortion. No one’s most personal medical decisions should be controlled by politicians, neighbors, complete strangers, or anyone else.