

# Oregon will retain abortion rights despite U.S. Supreme Court ruling

The governors of states on West Coast pledge to protect abortion rights

By **GARY WARNER**  
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — The governors of California, Oregon, and Washington on Friday, June 24, pledged to maintain access to abortions and other reproductive health care following the U.S. Supreme Court decision radically revising the Roe v. Wade ruling.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said the 6-3 decision handed down June 24 by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization means about 33.6 million women now find abortion illegal or inaccessible.

“Abortion is health care, and no matter who you are or where you come from, Oregon doesn’t turn away anyone seeking health care — Period,” Brown said in a statement. “Let me be clear: You cannot ban abortion, you can only ban safe abortions — and this disgraceful Supreme Court decision will undoubtedly put many people’s lives at risk.”

The position was endorsed by California Gov. Gavin Newsom and Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, both Democrats.

Former House Minority Leader Christine Drazen, the Republican nominee for governor of Oregon in 2022, said that if elected she would veto legislation to strengthen the state’s abortion access laws.

“Despite the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision, Oregon will continue to have among the most extreme abortion laws in the country and around the world. As governor, I will stand up for life by vetoing legislation designed to push Oregon further outside the



Stefani Reynolds/AFP via Getty Images

On Monday, May 2, 2022, a leaked Supreme Court initial draft majority opinion overturning Roe v. Wade inspired panic and protest among supporters of legal abortion and preliminary celebration for opponents of Roe v. Wade. Then, on June 24, the Supreme Court released its ruling and Roe officially fell.

mainstream.”

Former House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, the 2022 Democratic nominee for governor, slammed the ruling and said she would take an opposite approach to Drazen.

“Our right to control our own bodies and futures has been gutted,” she said. “I’m furious.”

Kotek called on abortion rights supporters to turn out for the November elections.

“Make no mistake: Reproductive freedom is on the ballot in Oregon this year,” she said.

Betsy Johnson, the former

Democratic state senator launching an unaffiliated bid for governor, said the right to choose abortion was a “bedrock” issue for her and the state.

“I am pro-choice,” she said. “As Oregon’s independent governor, I will always defend and protect a woman’s right to choose.”

In 1969, Oregon became one of the first states to legalize some form of abortion.

Modeled after a British statute, the state law approved by the Legislature allowed legal abortions during the first 150 days after

conception.

The patient had to be an Oregon resident and the procedure was limited to cases of rape, severe handicaps or danger to the mother’s physical or mental health. The procedure could only be done in a hospital by a physician.

The state’s early adoption of abortion rights became a rallying issue for Oregon Right to Life, which posts on its website: “Oregon is the only state in America with NO protective pro-life laws. Oregon also legalized abortion before Roe v. Wade.”



Amanda Loman/Salem Reporter, File Oregon Gov. Kate Brown on Friday, June 24, 2022, in a statement on the 6-3 decision handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court that radically revises Roe v. Wade, said, “Abortion is health care, and no matter who you are or where you come from, Oregon doesn’t turn away anyone seeking health care.”

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