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Pro-life demonstrators clash with pro-choice demonstrators outside the U.S. Supreme Court on January 22, 2015.

Roe v. Wade is at risk: what that means for Oregon

A conversation with NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon's Grayson Dempsey

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After a recent string of right-wing rulings from the U.S. Supreme Court was followed by swing-voter Justice Anthony Kennedy's retirement announcement, the stability of *Roe v. Wade* and the future of women's reproductive freedom in America has been called into question.

Laws restricting women's access to reproductive health care have been passed in numerous states, and a challenge to one of those laws could potentially work its way up to the U.S. Supreme Court and trigger a reversal of the historic 1973 decision that continues to protect a woman's right to choose.

But what would it mean for Oregonians, who live in a pro-choice state, if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned?

We decided to ask Grayson Dempsey.

At 38, Dempsey has been advocating for women's reproductive rights her entire career.

After minoring in women's studies at

University of Florida in her native state, she moved to Portland to work as an educator for Planned Parenthood Columbia/Willamette.

In 2004, she founded Backline, a hotline women could call for reproductive advice. She's also consulted for Ipas – a global organization focused on preventing deaths and disabilities from unsafe abortions – and served in various positions at Abortion Conservation Project, NARAL Pro-Choice Washington and Abortion Access Project, among other organizations focused on women's health issues. Since 2016, Dempsey has served as the executive director at NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, a reproductive rights organization with 10,000 members statewide.

"I have never been having conversations about the reality of *Roe* being overturned in the way that we are having them right now," she said.

We spoke with Dempsey about that potential reality, as well as other emerging



Grayson Dempsey

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See **DEMPSEY**, page 5