

Abortion:

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either. Following along with that, forced parenthood is traumatic. Even if the baby is guaranteed a better life, studies show that people who are adopted are four times more likely to attempt suicide.”

She said the coalition stands with a birthing person’s right to abortion access and “forcing them to have a child, whether adopted or in foster care, helps nobody.”

Mark Peterson, Umatilla County Democratic Party co-chair, characterized the ruling as deeply unfortunate. Republicans, he said, for the past 30-40 years have used the abortion debate to gain access to voters in the religious right.

“The move against abortion has been a key Republican platform, with most of the decisions being made by men legislating women’s bodies,” he said. “The position of the Democratic party in Oregon and nationally is a woman’s right to choose.”

Abortion rights group said they plan marches against the decision in Portland and Eugene. Groups also planned marches in other cities around the nation.

Trump’s appointees carry the vote

The ruling came with the key backing of the three most recent Supreme Court justices, all nominated by former President Donald Trump: Neil M. Gorsuch, Brett M. Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett. They were joined by Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas.

“The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision,” Alito wrote for the five justices who voted to overturn Roe v. Wade.



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File

More than a dozen anti-abortion and anti-same sex marriage supporters gather in 2018 on the steps of St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Pendleton on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade. The U.S. Supreme Court on Friday, June 24, 2022, reversed the ruling that had made abortion legal.

Chief Justice John Roberts concurred on a narrow portion of the decision ruling upholding the Mississippi law barring abortions after 15 weeks but not overruling Roe v. Wade.

“The court’s decision to overrule Roe and Casey is a serious jolt to the legal system,” Roberts wrote.

A dissent was filed by the shrinking liberal wing of the court — Justices Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

“A state can force her (a woman) to bring a pregnancy to term, even at the steepest personal and familial costs,” the dissent said.

In Ohio, Trump praised the ruling in an interview with Fox News.

“This is following the Constitution, and giving rights back when they should have been given long ago.”

President Joe Biden called the decision “a tragic error.”

“This is a sad day for the

country in my view,” Biden said.

Lawmakers weigh in

Much of the debate had been preordained for more than a month since a leaked draft of the ruling began circulating online.

Both abortion rights advocates and anti-abortion activists were ready for the official announcement.

Brown scorned the ruling in a statement the morning of June 24.

“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 governor said.

Former House Minority Leader Christine Drazan, R-Canby, the Republican nominee for governor of Oregon in 2022, supported the ruling. In a statement, Drazan said if elected governor, she would oppose attempts to

expand Oregon’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,” Drazan said. “As governor, I will stand up for life by vetoing legislation designed to push Oregon further outside the mainstream.”

Drazan’s stance put her at odds with her two leading opponents in the general election.

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 Drazan. “Our right to control our own bodies and futures has been gutted,” Kotek. “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,” Johnson said. “As Oregon’s independent governor, I will always defend and protect a woman’s right to choose.”

U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, tweeted a picture of the Supreme Court justices with the message, “A momentous decision. Every human life is sacred.”

Bentz represents the 2nd Congressional District, which includes most of Eastern and Central Oregon.

Oregon’s two U.S. Senators pilloried the decision.

“These radical Justices have ensured American women today have fewer rights than their grandmothers had decades ago — rights that

have proven essential to the health, economic participation and freedom of people to control their own bodies,” said U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon.

Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Oregon, sent video messages from the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., amid a crowd gathered outside to hear the decision.

“When you have to make the most intimate, personal decisions that will impact your life and your health and body, I don’t know anyone who wants some politician in the room,” Merkley said.

Abortion legal in Oregon since 1969

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.”

After the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in Roe v. Wade in 1973, Oregon aligned its laws with the federal standard.

In 2017, the Legislature approved a bill requiring insurance companies to cover abortions.

A copy of the Multi-State Commitment to Reproductive Freedom is at bit.ly/3tWdXDW.

— East Oregonian newsroom intern Antonio Arredondo contributed to this report.

Water:

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city in a press release stated officials are working to let residents city drinking water is safe, meeting and exceeding state and federal water quality guidelines.

“We want Boardman city residents to know that the safety of families in our community is our top priority — so we are taking an extra effort to share testing information and reports that provide confidence in the quality of the drinking water that we supply to city residents and local businesses,” Boardman City Manager Karen Pettigrew said in a statement.

The city reported it has taken the following steps to share information about its safe drinking water:

- Water quality testing results are available on the city website, www.cityofboardman.com, showing nitrate levels well within safety ranges established by Oregon Health Authority.

- Information about safety of drinking water and city hall contact information on the city reader board.

- Public service information flyers in key locations around Boardman.

Boardman also reported the city sent safe drinking water public service information to residential developers and city home-owners

“We continue to work closely with all local community health partners to make sure our neighbors get the assistance they need — we particularly applaud the efforts of the local businesses that have volunteered assistance in distributing clean water and paying for testing kits/filtration systems for our neighbors in rural Morrow County,” according to Pettigrew

For more information about safe drinking water, contact Boardman City Hall at 541-481-9252.

Looking toward the next steps

Gray said helpers will be giving way to new workers and new methods for combatting this emergency.



Erick Peterson/East Oregonian

Cases of water sit Thursday, June 23, 2022, in front of the Morrow County Government Center, 215 N.E. Main Ave., Irrigon.

“By next week, I’ll be back behind a desk,” he said.

Sites will be open a few times a week, he said, staffed by volunteers and paid workers, to distribute water and accept water samples.

He said distribution will start changing, too. Water deliveries will, more and more, replace pick-up locations.

In time, he said, the county plans to distribute filters

to each home. This is the mid-term plan, he said.

Gray explained as the emergency managers, he is concerned with the disaster itself, but the long-term plan involves government actually solving the ground-water problem so water is no longer polluted.

Elected county and city officials, he said, will have to “figure out what to do with that.”

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