The League of Women Voters of Florida supports every woman’s right to access affordable, high-quality reproductive health care, including access to abortion services and birth control. Public policy in a pluralistic society must affirm the constitutional right to privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

LWVFL supports:
- treating reproductive rights---including access to abortion---as a healthcare issue decidable by a woman and her qualified healthcare provider
- comprehensive sex education in schools to prevent unintended pregnancy, including increased access to publicly-funded family planning services and information on sexually transmitted diseases and birth control
- collaboration with 50+ organizations in the Floridians for Reproductive Freedom coalition in opposition to current or proposed restrictions on birth control and/or abortion

Current activity focus
Support of legislation that advances reproductive rights and comprehensive sex education
Oppose restrictive legislation (for example, laws that threaten a woman’s right to choose)
Initiate campaign to write Letters-to-the-Editor in support of LWVFL reproductive rights goals
Provide women with information on the full range of reproductive health care
Raise awareness of the impact on reproductive rights of Supreme Court cases and nominations and Crisis Pregnancy Centers (that is, CPCs or Fake Clinics)

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Florida Voters – Get in the Know

Florida Anti-Reproductive Health Legislation from recent years

2018 FL SB 1890/HB 1429 The “Method Ban bill” attempted to ban the most common method of second-trimester abortion, known as dilation and evacuation (or “D&E”). Under this unconstitutional bill, physicians would have been forced to use alternative procedures on their patients that are not necessarily as safe, or, based on their professional medical judgment, be the best procedure for their patient. This bill was not based on a desire to improve women’s health, but rather aimed to eliminate access to abortion as part of a larger anti-abortion strategy to ban abortion altogether. This legislation drew strong opposition from leading health care organizations and concerned Floridians and died in the Senate committee process. The legislation did pass through the House, an indication of the hostile environment in the House toward reproductive rights.

2018 Florida HB 41/SB 444 Codifies into law Crisis Pregnancy Centers (or CPCs) that oppose abortion and judge, shame, and intentionally try to trick women out of getting the care they are seeking. These fake clinics are created solely to “promote and encourage childbirth” and often deceive women into believing that they will be able to access comprehensive care and medically accurate information and instead encounter staff attempting to prevent them from obtaining an abortion or other reproductive health care, such as contraception. The legislative leadership prioritized this legislation and it passed even with strong opposition in both the House and Senate and was signed into law by Rick Scott.

2017-18 Florida Constitution Revision Commission Proposal 22 This proposed revision was an attempt to change privacy language in the Florida Constitution from ‘privacy’ to ‘privacy of personal information’ which would have negated the right to choose when it came to abortion. Due to public outcry, the Commission ultimately dropped this proposal and it was not included on the 2018 Ballot.
2017 SB 1140/HB 19 The “Abortion Provider Liability bill” would have created a new section of law outside of well-established medical malpractice statutes that allows a woman who consented to an abortion and signed a state-mandated informed consent form to sue her physician for damages for any physical injuries or any “emotional distress” she claims to have suffered as a result of negligence or failure to obtain the informed consent required by Florida law. The legislation was designed to make the legal landscape too risky for doctors to do their job by increasing their potential exposure to frivolous lawsuits and the expense of defending them. This legislation drew strong opposition from leading health care organizations and concerned Floridians and died in the committee process.

2017 SB 384/HB 203 “20-week Abortion Ban” was an unconstitutional attempt by opponents of safe and legal abortion to impose restrictions on access to abortion. The ban would have required women to travel out-of-state if they discovered a serious defect during second-trimester ultrasound. Did not see legislative action.

2017 SB 1130/HB 969 “Relating to Pregnancy Support and Wellness Services” would have established “Pregnancy Support Services” (also referred to as Crisis Pregnancy Centers or CPCs or Fake Clinics) as legitimate wellness centers and appropriate state funding to support and promote child birth. For years, CPCs have been receiving state funding with no oversight. All health care providers should be regulated and while this legislation establishes regulation and guidelines for CPCs such as financial reports and background checks of staff, we opposed this legislation in order to ensure that women receive medically accurate information and can access the full range of reproductive health care services. The legislation passed in the Florida House of Representatives. Was heard in one Senate committee but did not make it to a floor vote.

2017 SB 1006/HB 841 This “Anti-Abortion Propaganda Bill” promoted anti-abortion rhetoric by attempting to require that the state develop, promote and fund materials that communicate biased information with the intent to shame and judge women who seek abortions. This bill would have required the Department of Education to develop instructional materials for students that included information on prenatal care and adoption. Did not see legislative action.