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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

GOVERNOR HOCHUL CELEBRATES PASSAGE OF RESOLUTION TO ENSHRINE EQUAL RIGHTS INTO THE NEW YORK STATE CONSTITUTION

Governor Kathy Hochul today celebrated the passage of a resolution to enshrine equal rights into the New York State Constitution, which will solidify the right to abortion access in New York State. When enacted, the amendment will add ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare and autonomy to existing protections that currently cover discrimination based on race, color, religion or creed. This follows the Governor issuing a proclamation earlier today to add this resolution to the extraordinary session agenda, in light of the recent Supreme Court decision which removed federal protections for abortion.

"In just a week, Americans have already begun to see and feel the devastating consequences of the end of *Roe v. Wade*. In light of the horrifying Supreme Court decision to strip away reproductive rights, New York State is taking an unprecedented step toward codifying the right to an abortion in our State Constitution," **Governor Hochul said**. "I am grateful to Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie for moving this critical protection forward, building on our nation-leading protections for abortion patients and providers. In a moment of widespread polarization, New York is working to enshrine into our very Constitution that no matter who you love, where you come from, or how you choose to express yourself, you are welcome here and we will protect you."

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "The reversal of *Roe v. Wade* made it clear that New York State must continue to stand up and be a national leader to protect women and individual rights. That is why we are proactively codifying broader equal rights under the law and ensuring the constitutional right to abortion and contraception in New York. This is a massive step forward for our state while others move backwards, and an important stance against the Supreme Court's attacks on our rights. I am incredibly proud of our conference for advancing these historic changes to our constitution and thank Speaker Heastie and Governor Hochul for their partnership in getting this done."

Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie said, "The Supreme Court has failed women, and it has failed to protect the rights of Americans. But New York will not. Three years ago, we

codified the protections of Roe v. Wade into law, and today we began the process of enshrining protections for women's reproductive health care - and equal rights for all New Yorkers - into our state constitution. The Assembly Majority together with the governor and our partners in the Senate will not allow New Yorkers to have their rights stripped from. We will keep fighting to move New York forward, not backward."

Senator Liz Krueger said, "New Yorkers will continue to fight back against the Supreme Court's efforts to reverse progress on basic rights. I was proud to join the Governor and my legislative colleagues in moving to ensure the strongest protection for abortion and other reproductive care by enshrining these rights in our Constitution. Furthermore, the expansion of covered groups the the equal rights provisions of our Constitution will give New York the most comprehensive constitutional anti-discrimination protection of any state in the nation."

Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright said, "When we began this historic battle by introducing equality amendment to the New York Constitution, we stood on the shoulders of the women suffragists and civil rights leaders of many generations passed. With the enduring support of Governor Hochul, Speaker Heastie, Assembly and Senate colleagues, and numerous advocates, we are closer than ever to enshrining a woman's right to choose and equality protections against discrimination in the most important governing document of our state. The bright beaming light of New York State's leadership will shine through the dark gloomy days of the United States Supreme Court."

Following this momentous first passage, the resolution will need to pass again in the next legislative session before going to the voters for ultimate approval.

This action builds on New York State's leadership in protecting abortion access. This includes [a nation-leading \\$25 million dollar Abortion Provider Support Fund](#), overseen by the State Department of Health, to expand capacity and ensure access for patients seeking abortion care in New York, as well as \$10 million for reproductive healthcare centers to access security grants through the Division of Criminal Justice Services to help ensure the safety of the providers performing this vital care.

[Governor Hochul signed a comprehensive, six-bill package](#) passed by the legislature to further preserve, protect, and strengthen abortion rights for patients and providers in New York. The legislation takes specific actions to address a variety of legal concerns, including the establishment of a cause of action for unlawful interference with protected rights and the inclusion of abortion providers and patients in the Address Confidentiality Program. The new bills also prohibit misconduct charges against healthcare practitioners for providing reproductive services to patients who reside in states where such services are illegal and disallow medical malpractice insurance companies from taking adverse action against an abortion provider who provides legal care.

Additionally, immediately following the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade Governor Hochul launched a robust, multi-platform, paid public education

[campaign](#) to ensure New Yorkers—and all Americans—know that in New York State, abortion remains safe, legal, and accessible, always. The statewide campaign includes multi-platform advertising efforts and a [new](#) website, providing a single destination for information about abortion rights, providers, supports, and payment options in New York.

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