

Abstract:

This chapter examines how the issue of abortion did and did not impact the 2024 Presidential Election. The chapter analyzes the paradox of most Americans voting for Donald Trump; yet, simultaneously, a record number of states passing ballot initiatives granting more access to abortion, including conservative states that helped elect him again as president. This chapter also looks at how the issue of abortion will impact Trump's cabinet and, hence, the future of telehealth abortion and the abortion pill going forward. The next four years are likely to see more restrictive efforts by the Trump Administration on the issue of abortion while Democrats remain flummoxed on how to combat setbacks on reproductive rights.

Chapter 5: *Dobbs & the Ballot*

Two weeks ahead of the Biden-Trump 2024 Presidential Debate, *Gallup* reported that a “record-high” number of U.S. voters, 32%, stated they would only vote for a major office candidate who held their position on abortion. This sentiment was particularly strong among Americans who considered themselves pro-choice. However, the analytics company also reported that a smaller plurality of voters, 45%, which was down 11 points from the year prior, considered abortion to be just one of many important election issues. This latter finding was the lowest reading on abortion *Gallup* had seen since 2012. Moreover, 19% of voters (up five points) shared that a candidate supporting their view on abortion was not a major issue for them (Brenan and Saad, 2024). Polls such as this and the outcome of the 2024 election suggest that though abortion was a top issue and important to many voters, it may not have been THE motivating choice or the single issue they focused on in their voting calculation. Starting from the Biden-Trump debate through the election, this chapter will evaluate how abortion did and did not impact ballot measures and electoral outcomes in the first U.S. Presidential Election post *Dobbs*.

On June 27, 2024, then-President Joe Biden and Donald Trump squared off for their Presidential Debate. When asked where the candidates stood on abortion, Joe Biden affirmed his position on restoring *Roe v. Wade* (1973), which again, held that women have a constitutional right to abortion. Although Trump responded that he would not support a federal abortion ban, he did take credit for appointing “three great Supreme Court justices on the court,” for playing a role in overturning the landmark case and returning the issue of abortion and its regulation back to the states (CNN, 2024). Furthermore, when asked about his position on the abortion pill, which the Supreme Court ruled on just fifteen days prior to debate, Trump recognized that the federal government still needs to be involved in this issue. Trump stated he agreed with the Supreme Court's decision upholding the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) expedited regulation of mifepristone (again, when used with other drugs can end pregnancy up to ten weeks of gestation) (FDA, 2024). Trump also stated that unlike some members of the Republican Party he believed in exceptions to abortion for rape, incest, and the life of mother.

Biden rebutted Trump telling him that what he had done on the abortion issue was “terrible,” arguing that the majority of constitutional scholars and the public supported *Roe*. Again, this last claim, is evidenced by polls showing that near the time of the debate and going into the 2024 election, six in ten Americans agreed that abortion should be legal in all or most cases (Pew Research Center, 2024a).

Pressure mounted in the weeks following the debate for Biden to step down, after both Democrats and Republicans questioned his performance, drawing attention to his lack of mental acuity, age, physical decline, and “zoned out” appearance during the exchange (Elliot, 2024). Biden’s subsequent NATO press conference, his first solo one in months, also drew criticism as he referred to Vice President Kamala Harris as former President Trump and simply did not improve upon his debate performance (Williams, 2024). The press conference came on the heels of American Actor, George Clooney’s opinion editorial article in *The New York Times*, where he detailed hosting a large Democratic fundraiser for Joe Biden’s reelection and shared, he was concerned about the President’s condition and ability to effectively continue and win the election, urging him to step aside (Clooney, 2024). Succumbing to pressure from his party, Biden announced he was dropping out of the 2024 presidential race and expressed his support of Vice President Kamala Harris, ultimately endorsing her for to be the Democratic Presidential nominee ahead of the party’s August convention (Han, 2024).

Many Democrats hailed Biden’s decision to step aside as selfless, putting country before party (Wire and Palmer, 2024). Within days of Biden’s stepping down, Kamala Harris saw boosts in her favorability rating from 35% to 42%. And 63% of Democrats polled shared they were feeling “very enthusiastic” about her becoming the Democratic Presidential nominee (Pereira, 2024; IPSOS, 2024). On July 25, 2024, Kamala Harris, weeks before being nominated at the Democratic National Convention (DNC), launched her campaign with her first advertisement, “We Choose Freedom,” featuring Beyonce’s song, “Freedom,” highlighting among several issues, “the freedom to make decisions about your own body,” a nod to her position on securing reproductive rights (Sullivan, 2024). In the roll out of Harris’ campaign, abortion became the top election issue for young women under thirty years of age (PBS, 2024). However, the surge of enthusiasm among the Democratic party and young women was not enough for Harris to defeat Trump. Is it possible that American voters wanted both less restrictive abortion rights and Trump as president?

The 2024 National Party Nominating Conventions

After the Trump-Biden debate and President Biden announcing he would not seek reelection, both major parties geared up for their respective nominating conventions. The nominating conventions take place the summer leading into the general election and play an important role in the presidential selection process. At the conventions, delegates chosen by state and local party leaders meet to choose the party’s presidential nominee which is tied to

the primary and caucus election outcomes that happened in each of the states leading up to the summer conventions. (Nelson, 2011). In preparing for their convention, the Republicans revised their party's platform, particularly on the topic of abortion. Trump was able to influence a major change in the party's platform heading into the convention by getting the Committee to abandon the prior position of advocating for federal limits on abortion and instead adopting language favoring the issue to be decided by the states. Trump called into the meeting, addressing the delegates by phone to encourage them to adopt the new language and position. Some argue the state approach language is a major shift from the 2016 platform, which included advocating for a 20-week federal limit on abortion, as well as a proposal for states to pass the "Human Life Amendment," stating that life begins at conception (Messerly, Allison, and Senter, 2024). As a result of Trump's advocacy and strategy for the Republicans to walk into the convention and election leaving the issue of abortion access to the states, the platform's revised language states, "After 51 years (arguably reference to the overturning of *Roe* with the help of Trump's three conservative appointees to the Supreme Court during his first term as President), because of us, that power has been given to the States and to a vote of the People. We will oppose Late Term Abortion, while supporting mothers and policies that advance Prenatal Care, access to Birth Control, and IVF (fertility treatments)" (2024 GOP Platform).

The Democrats were also focusing on abortion ahead of their party's nominating convention in August, where the issue of reproductive rights was front and center during the four daylong event in Chicago. For example, the first day of the convention, the DNC spotlighted three women and a man who shared their experiences of pregnancies and miscarriages and protections they lost due to the *Dobbs* decision. The following evening, the convention included, Kate Cox, who sued Texas in the aftermath of the overturning of *Roe* when she could not qualify for an abortion under the state law (19thNews.org, 2024). Cox's story became national news when she received a fatal fetal diagnosis from her doctor, cautioning her that continuing her pregnancy would not only pose risks to her health, but also negatively impact her future fertility (Center for Reproductive Rights, 2024). Essentially, Cox did not qualify for an abortion on Texas law because it was deemed that her complications did not pose a life-threatening condition to her (Weber and Stengle, 2023). The Democrats proceeded to focus on abortion throughout the convention with including leaders from Planned Parenthood. The heavy focus on abortion politics during the convention was actually a pivot from prior years, where the strategy was to focus less on the issue during prime time coverage. Some argue that the Democrats recent focus on abortion actually only started to emerge at the nominating convention in 2016 when Hillary Clinton was at the top of the ticket (19thNews.org, 2024).

Overall, what made the abortion issue interesting during the 2024 RNC and DNC was that the parties seemed to do a switcheroo. In prior eras Republicans featured anti-abortion speakers and this year they were quieter during coverage and worked with party leaders and committees behind the scenes on their party's platform language as discussed above

(19thNews.org, 2024). And, Democrats, who were quieter on the issue in prior convention years (for example, Joe Biden being reluctant to discuss abortion during the 2020 convention—some say due to his Catholic faith), actually made reproductive rights arguably “THE” theme of the 2024 Democratic National Convention, thinking it would help bolster support as it did for the party in the 2022 midterm election (Bose, 2023).

For example, in addition to its featured speakers addressing abortion during the DNC, Kamala Harris’ keynote speech at the last night of the event mentioned abortion four times, reproductive freedom twice, and rights for women eight times. In her remarks, the former presidential candidate warned viewers about what was a risk in terms of access to abortion, stating, “Donald Trump hand-picked members of the United States Supreme Court to take away reproductive freedom. And now he brags about it...as part of his agenda, he and his allies would: limit access to birth control, ban medical abortion, and enact a nation-wide abortion ban...” (PBS, 2024). To the contrary, Donald Trump did not mention this issue of abortion or reproductive rights once during his convention speech.

Abortion & State Ballot Initiatives

So, with reproductive rights a top issue in the midterm elections and polls showing that the majority of Americans supported some form of abortion rights going into the 2024 general election, why did this issue not carry Kamala Harris to victory? Well, some argue that Americans wanted to have their cake and eat it too, meaning they wanted Trump for President and more secure access to abortion. Table 5.1 below shows, the states that had abortion measures on the 2024 ballot. Out of these ten states, seven passed initiatives providing legal avenues to challenge their respective state’s restrictive policies, prohibiting discrimination against reproductive care and autonomy, enshrined a constitutional right to abortion in their state constitutions, or prohibited states from restricting access to the procedure before viability which is approximately 24 to 26 weeks of the gestational period (Guarnieri and Leaphart, 2024).

(Insert Table 5.1)

Before jumping into what the outcome of the initiatives in the table above tells us about the state of abortion politics in the 2024 elections, it is important to note that ballot measures are a form of law (Council of State Governments, 2025). At the national level, the United States operates under the principles of representative democracy, where we elect our congressional representatives and they deliberate and vote for policy on our behalf, twenty four states have direct forms of democracy via the initiative process. Though the initiative process or some form of it varies by state, it allows voters to directly vote on ballot measures and effect policy (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2025). Some argue that these forms of direct democracy may actually encourage greater political equity. For example, scholarship shows that more affluent citizens are more likely to have their preferences reflected in public policy outcomes made by elected officials than less better-off citizens (Bartels, 2008; Rigby and Wright,

2011; Ellis, 2012). The idea behind forms of direct democracy is the hope that it promotes greater political equality by shifting the power in the policy-making process away from elites to everyday voters (Gerber, 1999).). Yet, this can be a challenging aspiration when we consider how many special interest groups insert themselves into the initiative process (Adams, 2012).

It is interesting to hold the purpose of indirect democracy and the *Dobbs* decision together in mind when processing the 2024 ballot initiatives on abortions. For example, in *Dobbs*, the Supreme Court notes thirteen times that in overturning *Roe* they are returning the issue back to the states. Specifically, regarding the issue of abortion and democracy, the *Dobbs* opinion states, “The Court’s decision today properly returns the Court to a position of neutrality and restores the people’s authority to address the issue of abortion through the processes of democratic self-government established by the Constitution” (*Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization*, 2022). Out of the seven states noted above that voted to expand abortion rights during the 2024 election, four (Arizona, Missouri, Montana, and Nevada) elected Donald Trump, the Republican Candidate for President. This is interesting given that Republicans hailed the *Dobbs* decision as a major victory for abortion, hoping conservative states would react by passing laws restricting abortion (Kessler, 2022). However, states noted here took the self-government ballot measure process to heart by taking the decision to protect access to abortion away from their representatives, the political elites, and place it instead in the hands of ordinary voters to decide.

Another interesting take-a-way from Table 5 is the state of Florida. Currently, Florida is considered a “red” state as the Republicans control both chambers of the state legislature and the governorship (NBC, 2024). Donald Trump won the state of Florida by 56.1% (Associated Press, 2024). Florida’s Republican governor, Ron DeSantis had over a 50% approval rating during the election season, signed the state’s “heartbeat bill” in 2023, and was highly outspoken against Amendment 4, the state’s abortion rights amendment, critical that it only required parental notification as opposed to consent and stating the measure would make Florida, “one of the most radical abortion jurisdictions, not just in the United States, but anywhere in the world” (Gancarski, 2024; Willis, 2024). Yet, 57.17% of Floridians participating in the election voted to pass Amendment 4. This majority fell short of the required 60% threshold required to amend the state’s constitution, interestingly enough a ballot measure that voters approved in 2006 (Varn, 2024). Despite the amendment falling short of the percentage needed to permit greater abortion access, the outcome is aligned with the majority of Americans that agree abortion should be legal in all to most cases (Pew, 2024b).

Furthermore, Missouri, a state that Donald Trump won by 58.5% and controlled by Republicans, also voted to protect a fundamental right to reproductive freedom in their state’s constitution with Amendment 3 (Associated Press, 2024). On December 20, 2024, the voters’ choice on Amendment 3 was judicially affirmed when Judge Jerri Zhang of the Jackson County Circuit Court ruled that the state’s abortion ban was “directly at odds” with the constitutional

amendment that passed in November. Judge Zhang proceeded to block other state restrictions on abortion such as the seventy-two hour waiting period and informed consent law, requiring patients to be given various state mandated information before receiving an abortion. However, Judge Zhang did not remove other provisions, like requiring abortion providing facilities to be licensed through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (Lieb, 2024). Interestingly, another conservative states, Montana, that voted for Donald Trump to the President by 58.4%, also passed a Right to Abortion Initiative, safe guarding a woman's ability to make decisions about their pregnancy, including an abortion up to the point of viability (Associated Press, 2024; Guttmacher, 2024). So, again, among the seven states that passed pro-abortion ballot measures in 2024, four voted for Donald Trump in the 2024 election.

Having Your Election Cake & Eating It Too:

As noted above, the question is, do these results indicate that voters want both less restrictive abortion rights and Trump to lead the country at the same time? Having seven of out ten states increase access to abortion is arguably a formidable win for reproductive rights, given where the nation has been since *Dobbs*. In the aftermath of the decision overturning *Roe*, over a dozen states tightened or eliminated access to abortion and the country saw an additional fifty abortion restrictions adopted by the states (Guttmacher, 2022).

Oddly, Kamala Harris, who made reproductive rights the hallmark of her campaign, was soundly defeated by Donald Trump who openly bragged about appointing three of the Supreme Court Justices who formed the majority opinion that voted to dismantle federal protections for abortion under the *Roe* and *Casey* frameworks. As abortion scholar Mary Ziegler explained to the *Los Angeles Times*, voters may not have felt like they had to choose between Trump and their position on abortion (Pinho, 2024). Again, direct democracy appears to give voters greater say over public policy and some argue that these mechanism can result in being more aligned with public opinion on a particular issue/ballot initiative (Arceneaux, 2002). However, some scholars are skeptical about the quality of direct democracy, arguing that it leads voters to rely on information short cuts that require more sophistication in deliberating over the policy decision (Lupia, 1992, 1994). Yet, it may be that the former reason was more at play in the 2024 election, meaning that since we know that the majority of Americans support some form of abortion, it should not necessarily surprise us that when given the opportunity to weigh in on granting or securing more access to the procedure in their states they did and this collided with the reality that most Americans simultaneously wanted Donald Trump as their President. Now, the latter choice, Trump also has President again is still being analyzed, and it may be that Biden held on too long and voters saw they could affect abortion politics in their states without also having to vote for Kamala Harris. These points are not the intention of this book, but suffice it to stay, it does appear that voters felt they could have their cake in certain states (greater abortion access) and eat it too (vote for Donald Trump to be the President).

Abortion Politics Going Forward

Now that Donald Trump has been elected once again to the presidency, what will his administration do on abortion policy? Interestingly, abortion was not mentioned during Trump's January 20, 2025, inauguration speech. On the second day of his administration, the Department of Health and Human Services deleted abortion materials from their website, with reports indicating search for the term and Trump's policies coming up as "unreachable" (Simmons-Duffin, 2025). Yet, by Friday, January 25th, President Trump signed an executive order to end the use of federal tax dollars to fund or promote elective abortion. The order reinforces the Hyde Amendment which took effect in 1980, restricting abortion under major federal healthcare programs like Medicaid and federal funds related to certain community health centers that provide health care services in underserved areas throughout the country (White House, 2025; Liu and Shen, 2022). Trump's executive order specifically rescinds two orders from President Biden that Trump argues violated the Hyde Amendment. Executive Order 14076 was rescinded which promoted the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, "which prohibits threats of force, obstruction and property damage intended to interfere with reproductive health care services" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2023). However, Trump's order does state that federal laws protecting access to medical care for pregnant women under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) and privacy of personal health information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPS) "remain in full effect" (White House, 2025). Trump also rescinded Executive Order 14079, which his administration argues categorized abortion as "healthcare" allowing taxpayer funding to be used for elective abortion and Medicaid to pay travel expenses for such procedures (*Ibid.*)

With the re-election of Donald Trump some question if he will look to Project 2025 for guidance and positioning on abortion policy. Project 2025 is a collaborative effort among conservatives to reshape government with an agenda that attacks the progressive policies of the Democrats and Biden Administration. Largely overseen by the conservative think tank, the Heritage Foundation, the nine hundred and twenty two page document provides a road map to the administration for advancing conservative change in America (Project 2025, 2024; Quinn and Rosen, 2024). On the topic of abortion, Project 2025 celebrates the overturning of *Roe*, and strongly urges the next conservative President to work with Congress to implement the "most robust protections for the unborn" and deploy "existing federal powers to protect innocent life" and vigorously comply with federal bans on abortion (Project 2025, 39, 2024). Project 2025's Mandate for Leadership mentions abortion one hundred and ninety-nine times. The manual cautions against infusing U.S. foreign aid dollars with abortion, conditioning the use of foreign aid by having countries agree not to promote abortion, abolishing the Gender Policy Council which they argue promotes abortion, to reserve any policies that provide abortion services for service members, to stop the use of U.S. tax payer money to promote abortion, and reserve the

U.S. government's approval of the chemical abortion pill, just to name a few (Project 2025, 2024).

When confronted about Project 2025 on the campaign trail, then presidential candidate, Donald Trump, vehemently denied being part of the group or taking its recommendations. For example, when visiting the Arizona-Mexico border, Trump defended accusations by Democrats of his involvement with the group by saying, "They've been told officially, legally, in every way, that we having nothing to do with Project 25" (Giles, 2024). Yet now that Donald Trump is officially President of the United States, some argue that his executive actions on abortion and positions of incoming cabinet members overlap with the goals of Project 2025 (Contorno and Tolan, 2025).

An illustration of enacting some of Project 2025's objectives can be seen in President Trump effectively closing the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), an organization that provides relief for developing countries struggling with poverty and various humanitarian issues and disasters (USA.gov, 2025). Within President Trump's first few weeks in office, his administration cut millions of dollars of funding to USAID which impacting the agency's programs geared towards reproductive and sexual health (United Nations, 2025). In a strong showing of how the administration looks to scale back the federal government and agencies who support family planning and reproductive rights around the world, Trump took the USAID off the lease of the building it occupied, signaling essentially the end of this organization and the efforts it promoted, including those geared towards contraception and reproductive autonomy (Knickmeyer, 2025).

Again, another example of Trump appearing to implement Project 2025's prolife mission can be seen in his presidential cabinet sections. Donald Trump's appointment of Robert F. Kennedy Jr as the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) can be consequential to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) authorization of mifepristone, the chemical abortion pill discussed at length in Chapters Two and Four of this book. The Department of HHS oversees the FDA; therefore, some argue that Kennedy may make moves to repeal the agency's authorization and relaxed regulations of the abortion drug we saw in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and during the Biden Administration. Moreover, Kennedy has went back and forth on abortion position, at times favoring a federal ban and then later stating he supports abortion up until a given number of weeks (Lee, 2025).

Furthermore, Trump's pick for the Commissioner of the FDA, Dr. Marty Makary has spoken publicly about abortion, discussing how in his clinical observations as a medical student that babies resist the procedure and how it weighs on one's conscious in seeing the procedure (Knuffke, 2024). Some argue that Makary may take steps to eliminate telehealth prescriptions for mifepristone and instead return to the drug being dispensed in person or perhaps even revoked the drug entirely. If Dr. Makary was to take the latter approach it would have a

significant impact on access to abortion since medicated abortion accounts for approximately 60% of all abortions in the United States (Lee, 2025).

Additionally, Donald Trump's pick for the Attorney General, Pam Bondi is a prolife advocate. Bondi will yield a lot of power sitting as the highest ranking member of the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the top law enforcement officer of the United States. Under the Biden Administration, the department's Office of Legal Counsel published a memo reaffirming that the Comstock Act, which has been at the center of the chemical abortion pill debate does not prohibit the mailing of mifepristone or misoprostol (Winy, 2024; Lee, 2025). Congress passed the anti-obscenity law in 1873, which makes it a federal offense to transport by mail or common carrier "obscene" materials, such as "every article or thing designed, adapted, or intended for producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral use" (18 USC 461, 2025). Some abortion rights scholars and activist argue that under Bondi, the DOJ may withdraw the Biden memo without issuing a new one. This could lead to uncertainty as to whether this old and obscure statutory relic from 1873 sees a resurgence and is used by prolife advocates in the Trump Administration as a tool to restrict access to chemical abortion across the United States, as a new federal interpretation and implement of this act may preempt state laws that do not criminalize Mifeprex (Lee, 2025). When asked during her Senate confirmation hearing if she would push for restrictive federal abortion laws, Bondi responded that she would follow the law of the United States and not her personal feelings. However, time will tell how the DOJ under her Bondi's leadership will handle access to Mifeprex and any possible criminalization of abortion.

Due to the *Dobbs* decision and the drastic sea of change between the Biden and Trump Administration, the "United" States is certain to remain unified across the states when it comes to the issue of abortion for at least the next fours. This will inevitably lead to multiple court showdowns between the Trump Administration and progressive states like California, who has vowed to be "ironclad" on abortion access. For example, California legislatures have recently introduced legislation to ensure the availability of abortion pills in the event the Trump Administration looks to interfere with distribution in the state. California legislators have also introduced bills that would financially penalize cities and counties that block the building of abortion clinics. Importantly, California has a strong proponent of abortion access in the state Attorney General, Rob Bonta and Governor, Gavin Newsom (Mays, 2024).

The fall out of *Dobbs* and the 2024 election will also pin states up against one another as conservative states in their efforts to penalize doctors who provide access to abortion on some level. For example, the state of Louisiana has issued an arrest warrant for Dr. Maggie Carpenter, co-founder of the Abortion Coalition for Telemedicine (ACT), a New York-based nonprofit organization, for allegedly providing abortion pills online to a pregnant minor, which is a felony in the state. Carpenter was indicted by a Louisiana grand jury. The state of Louisiana is the first state to label misoprostol a controlled and dangerous substance. The Governor of New York,

Kathy Hochul refused to comply with Louisiana Governor, Jeff Landry's request to extradite Carpenter. In a case involving the same doctor, Texas did not file felony charges against Carpenter, but she was fined \$100,000 penalty for breaking the state's law against teleabortion (Stengle, 2025).

Overall, the trifecta for the Trump Administration and pro-life conservatives is coming together as they use the courts, favorable legal arguments in select jurisdictions, and new cabinet members to restrict abortion access not just at the federal level, but influence it at the state level as well. Unfortunately, for pro-choice activists, they will continue an uphill battle over the next four years trying to not only undo the damage of *Dobbs* put the Trump Administration on their reproductive freedom agenda. Elections have consequences.

References

19thNews.org (2024) *Abortion is Front and Center at the DNC—and the Message is About Freedom*. Available at: <https://19thnews.org/2024/08/abortion-front-and-center-democratic-national-convention/> (Accessed 9 January 2025).

Adams, B.E. (2012) 'Citizens, Interest Groups, and Local Ballot Initiatives,' *Politics & Policy* 40(1), pp. 43-68. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-1346.2011.00336.x>

Associated Press (2024) *2024 Presidential Election Results*. Available at: <https://apnews.com/projects/election-results-2024/?office=P> (Accessed: 21 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Arizona Proposition 139, Right to Abortion Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/Arizona_Proposition_139,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_\(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Arizona_Proposition_139,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_(2024)) (Accessed 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Colorado Amendment 79, Right to Abortion and Health Insurance Coverage Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/Colorado_Amendment_79,_Right_to_Abortion_and_Health_Insurance_Coverage_Initiative_\(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Colorado_Amendment_79,_Right_to_Abortion_and_Health_Insurance_Coverage_Initiative_(2024)) (Accessed: 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Florida Amendment 4, Right to Abortion Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_Amendment_4,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_\(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_Amendment_4,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_(2024))

Ballotpedia (2024) *Maryland Question 1, Right to Reproductive Freedom Amendment*. Available at [https://ballotpedia.org/Maryland_Question_1,_Right_to_Reproductive_Freedom_Amendment_\(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Maryland_Question_1,_Right_to_Reproductive_Freedom_Amendment_(2024)) (Accessed 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Missouri Amendment 3, Right to Reproductive Freedom Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/Missouri_Amendment_3,_Right_to_Reproductive_Freedom_Initiative_\(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Missouri_Amendment_3,_Right_to_Reproductive_Freedom_Initiative_(2024)) (Accessed 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Montana CI-128, Right to Abortion Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/Montana_CI-128,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_\(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Montana_CI-128,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_(2024)) (Accessed 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Nebraska Initiative 434, Prohibit Abortions After the First Trimester Amendment*. Available at:

[https://ballotpedia.org/Nebraska Initiative 434, Prohibit Abortions After the First Trimester Amendment \(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Nebraska_Initiative_434,_Prohibit_Abortions_After_the_First_Trimester_Amendment_(2024)) (Accessed 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Nebraska Initiative 439, Right to Abortion Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/Nebraska Initiative 439, Right to Abortion Initiative \(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Nebraska_Initiative_439,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_(2024)) (Accessed 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *Nevada Question 6, Right to Abortion Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/Nevada Question 6, Right to Abortion Initiative \(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Nevada_Question_6,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_(2024)) (Accessed 17 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *New York Proposal 1, Equal Protection of Law Amendment*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/New York Proposal 1, Equal Protection of Law Amendment \(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/New_York_Proposal_1,_Equal_Protection_of_Law_Amendment_(2024)) (Accessed 14 January 2025).

Ballotpedia (2024) *South Dakota Constitutional Amendment G, Right to Abortion Initiative*. Available at: [https://ballotpedia.org/South Dakota Constitutional Amendment G, Right to Abortion Initiative \(2024\)](https://ballotpedia.org/South_Dakota_Constitutional_Amendment_G,_Right_to_Abortion_Initiative_(2024)) (Accessed 14 January 2025).

Brenan, M. and Saad, L. (2024) 'Record Share of U.S. Electorate Is Pro-Choice and Voting on It,' *Gallup*, 13 June. Available at: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/645836/record-share-electorate-pro-choice-voting.aspx> (Accessed: 22 November 2024).

Bose, N. (2024) 'Abortion Rights Center Stage in Democrats' 2024 US Election Campaign,' *Reuters*, 1 September 2023. Available at: Bose, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/democrats-push-abortion-rights-heart-2024-campaign-2023-09-01/> (Accessed 13 January 2025).

Center for Reproductive Rights (2024) *Kate Cox Tells Her Story*. Available at: <https://reproductiverights.org/nyt-daily-cox-v-texas/> (Accessed 9 January 2025).

Comstock Act. United States Code Title 18, Section 1461. Available at: <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title18-section1461&num=0&edition=prelim> (Accessed 10 February 2025).

Contorno, S. and Tolan, C. (2025) 'Trump Said He Hadn't Read Project 2025—But Most of His Early Executive Actions Overlap with its Proposals,' *CNN*, 31 January. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2025/01/31/politics/trump-policy-project-2025-executive-orders-invs/index.html> (Accessed 3 February 2025).

Clooney, G. (2024) 'I Love Joe Biden. But We Need a New Nominee,' *The New York Times*, 10 July. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/07/10/opinion/joe-biden-democratic-nominee.html> (Accessed 3 February 2025).

CNN (2024) Biden-Trump Debate Transcript. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2024/06/27/politics/read-biden-trump-debate-rush-transcript/index.html> (Accessed 3 January 2025).

Department of Justice (2023) *Protecting Patients and Health Care Providers*. Available at: <https://www.justice.gov/crt/protecting-patients-and-health-care-providers> (Accessed 29 January 2025).

Dobbs, State Health Officer of the Mississippi Department of Health, et al. v. Jackson Women's Health Organization et al. (2022) Supreme Court of the United States, case 19-1392. Available at: https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/21pdf/19-1392_6j37.pdf (Accessed: 1 April 2024).

Food and Drug Administration (2024) Questions and Answers on Mifepristone for Medical Termination of Pregnancy Through Ten Weeks of Gestation. Available at: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/postmarket-drug-safety-information-patients-and-providers/questions-and-answers-mifepristone-medical-termination-pregnancy-through-ten-weeks-gestation#:~:text=Mifepristone%20is%20a%20drug%20that,of%20the%20last%20menstrual%20period> (Accessed 3 January 2025).

Gancarski, A.G. (2024) 'Ron DeSantis in Good Shape in Poll with Bad News for Other Florida Republicans,' *Florida Politics*, 13 August. Available at: <https://floridapolitics.com/archives/689471-ron-desantis-in-good-shape-in-poll-with-bad-news-for-other-florida-republicans/> (Accessed 21 January 2025).

Giles, B. (2024) 'Trump Again Distances Himself From Project 2025,' *National Public Radio*, 22 August. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2024/08/22/g-s1-19202/trump-project-2025-border-immigration> (Accessed: 3 February 2025).

Guarnieri, I. and Leaphart, K. (2024) 'Abortion Rights Ballot Measures Win in 7 out of 10 US States,' *Guttmacher.org*, 6 November. Available at: <https://www.guttmacher.org/2024/11/abortion-rights-state-ballot-measures-2024> (Accessed: 17 January 2025).

Han, J. (2024) 'Want to Know What Biden Said When He Dropped Out? The Full Letter is Here,' *NPR*, 21 July. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2024/07/21/g-s1-12544/biden-letter-withdraw-harris-endorsement> (Accessed 5 January 2025).

Harris, K. (2024) 'Democratic National Convention Speech,' *PBS.org*, 23 August. Available at: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/read-kamala-harris-full-speech-at-the-democratic-national-convention-2> (Accessed 14 January 2025).

Ipsos (2024) *Most Democrats Are Very Enthusiastic About Kamala Harris as the Democratic Nominee*. Available at: <https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/most-democrats-are-very-enthusiastic-about-kamala-harris-democratic-nominee> (Accessed 5 January 2025).

Iowa State University Archives of Women's Political Communication (2024) *Kamala Harris Launches Her Campaign for President*. Available at: <https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2024/07/26/kamala-harris-launches-her-campaign-for-president-july-25-2024/> (Accessed 5 January 2025).

Knickmeyer, E. (2025) 'Trump Administration Takes USAID off its Building Lease,' *PBS*, 10 February. Available at: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/trump-administration-takes-usaid-off-its-building-lease> (Accessed 28 February 2025).

Knuffke, L. (2024) 'Trump's FDA Appointment is Pro-Life,' *CatholicVote.org*, 26 November. Available at: <https://catholicvote.org/trumps-fda-appointment-is-pro-life/> (Accessed 6 February 2025).

Lee, C. (2025) 'The Powers Trump's Nominees Will Have Over Abortion,' *Time*, 22 January. Available: <https://time.com/7209202/donald-trump-cabinet-abortion/> (Accessed 6 February 2025).

Lin, E.C. and Shen, W.W. (2022) 'The Hyde Amendment: An Overview,' *Congressional Research Service*, 20 July. Available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF12167> (Accessed 29 January 2025).

May, M. (2024) 'Ahead of Second Trump Term, California Vows 'Ironclad' Abortion Access,' *Los Angeles Times*, 4 December. Available at: <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-12-04/ahead-of-second-trump-term-california-vows-ironclad-abortion-access> (Accessed 19 February 2025).

McCarthy, R. (2024) 'Florida's Amendment to Protect Abortion Rights Fell Short of Passing by Just 3% Votes,' *National Public Radio*, 9 November 2024. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/2024/11/09/nx-s1-5183891/floridas-amendment-to-protect-abortion-rights-fell-short-of-passing-by-just-3-votes> (Accessed 26 January 2025).

Messerly, M., Allison, N., and Sentner, I. (2024) 'RNC Committee Approves Dropping National Limits on Abortion from Party Platform,' *Politico*, 8 July. Available at: <https://www.politico.com/news/2024/07/08/rnc-platform-national-abortion-limits-00166788> (Accessed 3 January 2025).

Nash, E. (2022) 'State Policy Trends 2022: In a Devasting Year, US Supreme Court's Decision to Overturn Roe Leads to Bans, Confusion and Chaos,' *Guttmacher*, 19 December. Available at:

<https://www.guttmacher.org/2022/12/state-policy-trends-2022-devastating-year-us-supreme-courts-decision-overturn-roe-leads> (Accessed 29 January 2025).

Nation Conference of State Legislatures (2024) *Initiative and Referendum Processes*. Available at: <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/initiative-and-referendum-processes> (Accessed 20 January 2025).

News Service Florida (2024) *A Wholesale Repudiation: The Red Tsunami that Swept Florida*. Available at: <https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/a-wholesale-repudiation-the-red-tsunami-that-swept-florida/3467568/> (Accessed 21 January 2025).

Franklin, A.W. (2012) 'Management of the problem', in S.M. Smith (ed.) *The maltreatment of children*. Lancaster: MTP, pp. 83–95.

Nelson, C.J. (2011) 'The Nominating Conventions,' in G. Park (ed.) *The Democratization of Presidential Elections, 1968-2008*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, pp. 45-58.

Pereira, I. (2024) 'Kamala Harris Sees Boost in Favorability After Joe Biden Drops out of Race: POLL,' *Eyewitness News*, 28 July. Available at: <https://abc7.com/post/kamala-harris-poll-vp-sees-favorability-boost-after-joe-biden-drops-out/15111289/> (Accessed 5 January 2025).

Pew Research Center (2024a) *Public Opinion on Abortion: 1995-2004*. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/fact-sheet/public-opinion-on-abortion/> (Accessed 21 January 2025).

Pew Research Center (2024b) *Broad Public Support for Legal Abortion Persists 2 Years After Dobbs*. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2024/05/13/broad-public-support-for-legal-abortion-persists-2-years-after-dobbs/> (Accessed 3 January 2024).

Pinho, F. (2024) 'How Both Trump and Abortion Access Won the 2024 Election,' *Los Angeles Times*, 6 November. Available at: <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2024-11-06/voters-want-abortion-and-trump-too> (Accessed 29 January 2025).

Pons, G. (2024). 'Read Donald Trump's Full RNC Speech Accepting GOP Nomination,' *NBC 10 Boston*, 19 July. Available at: <https://www.nbcboston.com/news/national-international/read-donald-trumps-full-rnc-speech-accepting-gop-nomination/3432055/> (Accessed 14 January 2025).

Quinn, M. and Rosen, J. (2024) 'What is Project 2025? What to Know About the Conservative Blueprint for Second Trump Administration,' *CBS News*, 8 November. Available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/what-is-project-2025-trump-conservative-blueprint-heritage-foundation/> (Accessed 3 February 2025).

Simmons-Duffin, S. (2025) 'Trump's Federal Health Website Scrubs 'abortion' Search Results, *National Public Radio*, 21 January. Available at: <https://www.npr.org/sections/shots-health-news/2025/01/21/nx-s1-5269875/trump-abortion-hhs-reproductive-rights> (Accessed 3 February 2025).

Stengle, J. (2025) 'New York Doctor is Fined in Texas, Charged in Louisiana Over Abortion Pills in Tests of Shield Laws,' *Associated Press*, 14 February. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/abortion-doctor-maggie-carpenter-pills-847112cde026e29333c3481310593582> (Accessed 19 February 2025).

Sullivan, H. (2024) 'We Choose Freedom: Kamala Harris Campaign Launches First Ad,' *The Guardian*, 25 July. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/article/2024/jul/25/we-choose-freedom-kamala-harris-campaign-launches-first-ad> (Accessed 5 January 2025).

The American Presidency Project (2024) *The Republican Party Platform*. Available at: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2024-republican-party-platform> (Accessed 3 January 2025).

The Council of State Governments (2023) *What is a Ballot Measure?* Available at: <https://www.csg.org/2023/11/02/ballot-measures/> (Accessed 20 January 2025).

The Heritage Foundation (2024) *Project 2025: Mandate for Leadership the Conservative Promise*. Available at: https://static.project2025.org/2025_MandateForLeadership_FULLL.pdf (Accessed 3 February 2025).

United Nations (2025) *US Funding Cuts Confirmed, Ending Lifesaving Support for Women and Girls*. Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/02/1160631> (Accessed 28 February 2025)

USA.GOV (2025) *U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)*. Available at: <https://www.usa.gov/agencies/u-s-agency-for-international-development#:~:text=The%20U.S.%20Agency%20for%20International,and%20engaging%20in%20democratic%20reforms.> (Accessed 28 January 2025).

Varn, K. (2024) 'Why Florida Requires 60% Approval for Constitutional Amendments,' *AXIOS Tampa Bay*, 6 November. Available at: <https://www.axios.com/local/tampa-bay/2024/11/06/florida-60-percent-constitutional-amendments-weed-abortion> (Accessed: 21 January 2025).

Weber, P. and Stengle, J. (2023) 'Kate Cox Sought an Abortion in Texas. A Court Said No Because She Didn't Show Her Life Was in Danger,' *Associated Press*, 12 December. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/abortion-kate-cox-texas-exceptions-e85664b2ab76bcb689b1b91913d3e33e> (Accessed 9 January 2025).

White House (2025) *Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Enforces Overwhelmingly Popular Demand to Stop Taxpayer Funding of Abortion*. Available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/01/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-enforces-overwhelmingly-popular-demand-to-stop-taxpayer-funding-of-abortion/> (Accessed 29 January 2025).

Williams, M. (2024), 'Takeaways from Biden's Critical Solo News Conference,' *CNN*, 11 July 2024. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/11/politics/takeaways-biden-nato-news-conference/index.html> (Accessed 5 January 2025).

Wire, S.D. and Palmer, K. (2024) 'Top Senators, Representatives React to Biden Dropping out of 2024 Election,' *USA Today*, 21 July. Available at: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/elections/2024/07/21/congress-reacts-to-biden-dropping-out-endorsement-of-harris/74490865007/> (Accessed 5 January 2025).

Willis, A. (2024) 'Radical': Gov. DeSantis Speaks Out Against Amendment 4 on Abortion,' *First Coast News*, 21 October. Available at: <https://www.firstcoastnews.com/article/news/politics/elections/desantis-speaks-out-against-amendment-4-on-abortion/77-8b2286f2-f565-4792-9e6e-30ea8d40699a> (Accessed 21 January 2025).

Winy, A. (2024) 'The Threat to Abortion Rights You Haven't Heard Of,' *John Hopkins University*, 31 May. Available at: <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2024/how-the-comstock-act-threatens-abortion-rights> (Accessed 10 February 2025).