

THE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

A Health Policy and Advocacy Update - December 2023

Thank you for your participation in the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine's **State Liaison Network** (SLN). Our quarterly newsletter brings you the latest advocacy, policy, and public health updates, happenings, and actions from the Society.

In this issue, you'll find:

- ★ **State Liaisons in Action**
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STATE LIAISONS IN ACTION

Colorado – **Dr. Leilah Zahedi-Spung** was featured in "[Post-Roe America: 4. Uprooted](#)," an episode of *The Nocturnists* podcast.

Nebraska – **Dr. Emily Patel** was featured in "[Post-Roe America: 5. Culture of Silence](#)," an episode of *The Nocturnists* podcast.

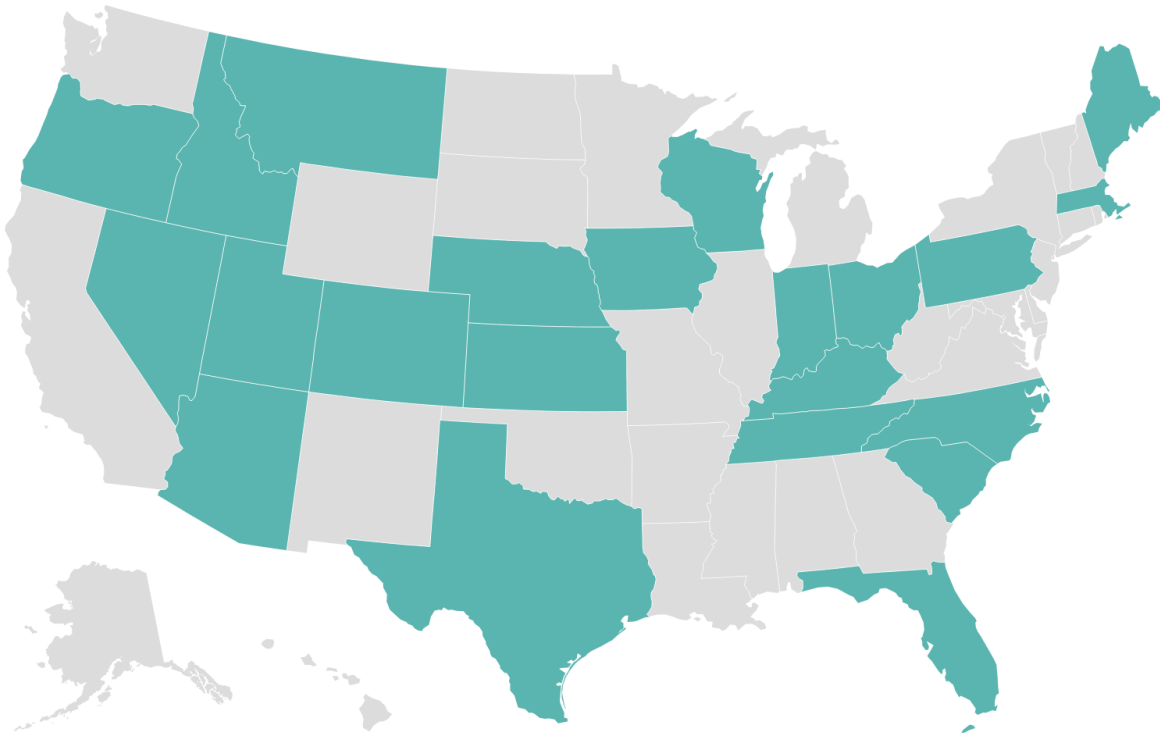
Ohio – **Dr. David Hackney** and other SMFM members continued to champion the ballot measure that would ensure access to reproductive health care, including abortion. Their efforts were successful, as the ballot measure passed in the November election!

Have you been advocating for reproductive and perinatal health in your state? Share your work with SMFM by emailing Samantha Berg at sberg@smfm.org.

All Advocacy Activities

[All Advocacy](#)[Ballot Initiatives](#)[Judicial Advocacy](#)[Legislative & Regulatory Advocacy](#)[Media Advocacy](#)

Select a state to see all actions our members and staff have taken in the last year to advance perinatal and reproductive health.



Source: Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine • Created with Datawrapper

SMFM ACTIONS AND UPDATES

Amicus Briefs

SMFM continues to submit friend of the court briefs to protect access to health care services critical to our mission. In early October, we filed a [brief](#) in the Supreme Court of Arizona supporting the repeal of the 1849 abortion ban, as well as a [brief](#) to the fifth circuit court of appeals in the case of *Braidwood Management v. Becerra*. Following a cross-appeal on the lower court's decision by the state, we submitted this brief to address the importance of the preventive services recommended by HRSA and ACIP.

Later that month, we filed an [amicus brief](#) urging the Supreme Court of the United States to preserve access to mifepristone in the case *Danco Laboratories, LLC v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine et al*. In November, we filed a [brief](#) in the Supreme Court of Texas outlining the importance of abortion care for patients with health- or life-threatening conditions.

And just last week, we filed two briefs: the first was a [brief](#) to the Supreme Court of Texas, urging the court to allow [Kate Cox](#) to obtain a life-saving abortion in Texas; the second was an [amicus brief](#) in the Supreme Court of Montana outlining the harms of parental consent laws.

STATE HAPPENINGS

Perinatal health advancements

In October, **California** [Governor Gavin Newsome signed AB 1481 into law](#), expanding the state's Presumptive Eligibility program.

In the same month, following the enactment of SB 58 in July which expanded postpartum Medicaid to one year and increased the eligibility limit to 225% the federal poverty line, **Alaska's Department of Health announced it was seeking approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.**

Celebrating abortion access wins

Ohio advocates saw a huge win in early November when [Issue 1, the ballot measure codifying access to reproductive health services, passed with a 13 point margin.](#)

Later in the month, **Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed the Reproductive Health Act (RHA) into law.** The RHA is a package of bills repealing statute that served to restrict access to abortion care.

Monitoring abortion bans and restrictions

As of December 13, 2023, **21** states have abortion bans up to 20 weeks gestation currently or soon to be in effect: **Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and West Virginia.**

14 of these states (**Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia**) have total bans.

For up to date information on state abortion policies, see resources from [Abortion Finder](#), [Guttmacher Institute](#) and the [New York Times](#). You can also track pending state legislation alongside SMFM staff on our [Advocacy Hub](#).

TAKE ACTION

Share Anonymous Stories of Clinical Care

SMFM is regularly approached by policymakers and reporters who want to better understand the impacts of abortion restrictions on high-risk pregnant people and MFMs. One powerful way for MFMs to influence public policy and public understanding of abortion is to share their lived experiences. Recognizing that many MFMs may not be permitted to and/or are hesitant to describe what is happening with their patients in public forums, **SMFM has created an anonymous story collection tool.** [Learn more and share your story here.](#)

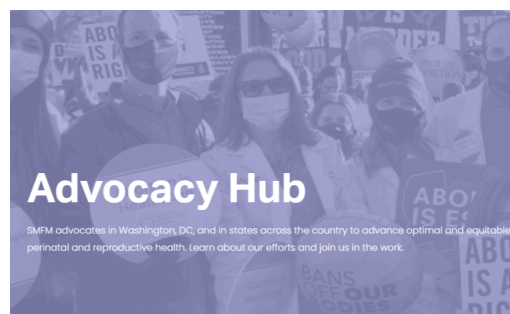
Track Policies and Submit a Request for Advocacy Support

Get more involved in advocacy in your state by [tracking policies alongside SMFM staff](#) and using our [Request Support form](#) to get assistance from Advocacy staff.

SMFM AND PARTNER RESOURCES

SMFM Advocacy Hub

SMFM's [Advocacy Hub](#) is your one-stop shop for all things advocacy, providing all the information you need about SMFM's advocacy priorities, activities and updates, and more. The Hub includes a state bill tracker that can help you monitor what is being proposed in your state, as well as an easy-to-use portal for you to request SMFM engagement and support for your advocacy efforts.



Center for Reproductive Rights: 2023 State Legislative Wrap-Up

This [policy report](#) by the Center provides an overview of the U.S. state policy landscape after tracking almost 2,000 bills proposed and enacted in state legislatures relating to

reproductive care.

Guttmacher: Monthly Abortion Provision Study

In response to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the Guttmacher Institute launched a new research initiative to track monthly estimates of medication and procedural abortions provided within the formal US health care system. [The Monthly Abortion Provision Study interactive resource](#) currently shows monthly data from January to September 2023 and is designed to help measure the impacts of abortion policies on state-level abortion incidence and trends.

Guttmacher: State Policy Trends 2023

Guttmacher's [state policy trend report for 2023 is now live](#), featuring a detailed analysis of this year's developments in reproductive health policy—including abortion, gender-affirming care and contraception. The analysis shows how the US abortion access landscape is becoming even more fractured.

Society of Family Planning: #WeCount Report

[#WeCount](#) is a time-limited reporting effort that aims to capture the shifts in abortion volume, by state, by month, following the Dobbs v Jackson's Women's Health Organization Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe*. Their [latest report](#), released in October 2023, covers data from April 2022 to June 2023.

WHAT WE'RE READING

["Abortion Info Buried on Many Hospitals' Websites, Study Shows,"](#) *MedPage Today*

["Alabama woman was forced to give birth in a jail shower, lawsuit says,"](#) *The Washington Post*

["As Abortion Access Shrinks, Hospitals Fill in the Gaps,"](#) *The New York Times*

["Conservatives move to keep abortion off the 2024 ballot,"](#) *Politico*

["Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker launches organization focused on protecting abortion rights,"](#) *19th News*

["Maternal-fetal surgery is not an alternative to abortion care,"](#) *STAT News*

["Measuring the long-term cost of restricting abortion access,"](#) *STAT News*

["Nebraska Mom Gets 2 Years in Prison After Buying Abortion Pills for Her Teen Daughter,"](#) *Jezebel*

["New Power Player in Abortion Politics: Yelp,"](#) *Rolling Stone*

["Tennessee's abortion ban put her at risk – now she's running for office to change the law,"](#) *The Guardian*

["Why would we take men? This is an OB/GYN': Gender, hysterectomy, and the patriarchal dividend,"](#) *Sociology Compass*

["Wisconsin's dangerous abortion restrictions threatened my life and will continue to harm women,"](#) *Wisconsin Examiner*

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Please share any feedback or items for future newsletters directly with Samantha Berg,
SMFM's State Advocacy Manager (sberg@smfm.org)

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