

THE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

A Health Policy and Advocacy Update - June 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:

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OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE INPUT ON A NEW ADVOCACY PROJECT

Project Overview:
Integrating Disability Justice into Reproductive Health Care Counseling and Advocacy
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Patient Forward

The graphic has a light beige background with decorative wavy borders in pink, orange, and black at the top and bottom. The text is centered and includes a horizontal line above and below the main title.

SMFM is working with our partners at Patient Forward to develop introductory resources to disability justice and how it can and should inform our advocacy. We are seeking MFM volunteers to join us for a discussion later this summer so we can understand what content and format will be most beneficial to you.

[Fill out our interest form here!](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Last month, SMFM sent a letter to Maine's Speaker of the House [endorsing LD 1619](#), which would expand access to abortion care later in pregnancy by removing language that only allows care after viability to save the life and health of the mother and adding language allowing physicians to use their medical judgment.

STATE HAPPENINGS

Perinatal health advancements

Last week, **Nevada** Governor Joe Lombardo signed SB 232 into law, which [extends the state's Medicaid coverage from 60 days to one year postpartum](#).

Celebrating abortion access wins

In the last three months, several states have taken action to protect and expand access to abortion care.

In early April, **Wisconsin** voters [elected pro-choice judge Janet Protasiewicz](#) to the state Supreme Court. Protasiewicz was clear about her support for abortion rights in her campaign. Just one day later, **Michigan** Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed bipartisan legislation to [repeal the state's 1931 abortion ban](#), following the success of Proposal 3 last November.

In mid-April, **Colorado** Governor Jared Polis signed three bills [enshrining access to abortion and gender-affirming care](#), establishing the state as a safe haven for its restrictive neighbors.

A month later, **Vermont** Governor Phil Scott signed [shield laws protecting both abortion and gender-affirming care](#), including access to mifepristone, and **Nevada** Governor Joe Lombardo signed a [shield law protecting abortion care for both in-state providers and out-of-state patients](#).

We also saw a few wins in the courts. In **Utah**, a [judge delayed the implementation of the statewide abortion clinic ban](#), claiming that Planned Parenthood provided sufficient preliminary evidence that the law singles out abortion clinics without reason. Additionally, **Iowa's** state [Supreme Court declined to reinstate an abortion ban](#), while **South Carolina's** recent 6-week ban was [temporarily halted](#) until the state Supreme Court can review it.

Monitoring abortion bans and restrictions

Anti-abortion state legislators continue to introduce harmful bills. In early April, **Idaho** Governor Brad Little signed an ["abortion trafficking" law](#), which would make it illegal to obtain medication abortion for a minor or help them leave the state to obtain abortion care without their guardians' consent.

North Carolina legislators [overrode the governor's veto](#) of a 12-week ban last month – the law is set to take effect on July 1.

Nebraska also passed a 12-week abortion ban; the law also restricts gender-affirming care for people under the age of 19. The law is currently in effect, with [courtroom arguments delayed until July 19](#).

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed a [6-week ban](#) in April – this will only take effect if the current 15-week ban is upheld by the state Supreme Court.

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

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

In 8 states, courts are determining if existing or new bans can take effect: **Arizona, Indiana, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, Utah, and Wyoming.**

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

Contact Your Legislators

State-based maternal mortality review committees (MMRCs) are essential to addressing the nation's maternal mortality crisis and reducing inequities in maternal health outcomes. They allow clinicians, health systems, and public health officials to focus their efforts and resources on the leading causes of maternal mortality.

Champions in the House of Representatives have introduced the Preventing Maternal Deaths Reauthorization Act of 2023 (H.R. 3838), which will renew federal grants to state-based MMRCs and continue efforts to strengthen review committees. Join SMFM in building support for H.R. 3838 by [asking your Representative to cosponsor the bill](#).

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

Medical Emergencies and Access to Abortion Care

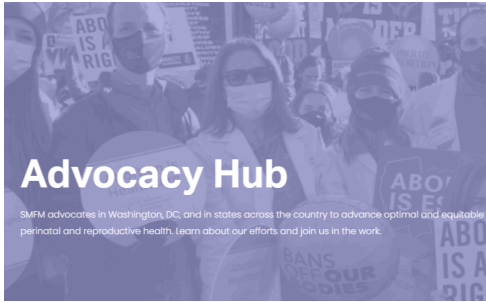
In a [recent letter to health care providers](#), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reiterated that the [Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act \(EMTALA\)](#) requires hospitals to offer medical treatment, including abortion care, necessary to stabilize a pregnant patient's emergency medical condition. Learn more about SMFM's work to protect your ability to provide necessary and lifesaving health care to patients experiencing obstetric emergencies at our [new EMTALA web page](#).

Medication Abortion

There are currently several high-profile cases moving through the courts causing confusion about access to mifepristone. In one such case, *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. U.S. Food and Drug Administration*, anti-abortion advocates are challenging the FDA's authority in the approval of mifepristone. SMFM has weighed in at every stage, affirming the safety and efficacy of mifepristone and denouncing the case as baseless. We will continue to monitor these cases closely and provide updates on our [Medication Abortion landing page](#).

Advocacy Hub

Earlier this year, SMFM officially launched our new [Advocacy Hub](#)! This 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



Advocacy Hub

SMFM advocates in Washington, DC, and in states across the country to advance optimal and equitable perinatal and reproductive health. Learn about our efforts and join us in the work.

proposed in your state, as well as an easy-to-use portal for you to request SMFM engagement and support for your advocacy efforts. You can also send your fellow SMFM members here to sign up for the State Liaison Network.

Society of Family Planning: New #WeCount Report

Last week, the Society of Family Planning (SFP) released the [third report in their #WeCount series](#), covering data from April 2022 to March 2023.

WHAT WE'RE READING

["A Texas woman was killed by her boyfriend after getting an abortion, police say,"](#) *NPR*

["Abortion bans drive off doctors and close clinics, putting other health care at risk,"](#) *NPR*

["Abortion care training is banned in some states. A new bill could help OB-GYNs get it,"](#) *NPR*

["Adolescents know and care about the changing legal landscape of abortion in the US,"](#) *News-Medical*

["Alabama mother denied abortion despite fetus' 'negligible' chance of survival,"](#) *ABC News*

["For one family, Florida abortion law made a devastating loss into 'torture',"](#) *The Washington Post*

["Future doctors say they're discouraged from working in states with abortion bans,"](#) *ABC News*

["Husband Sued Over His Ex-Wife's Abortion; Now Her Friends Are Suing Him,"](#) *The New York Times*

["I suffered from postpartum depression, and I told no one, too,"](#) *CT Mirror*

["In a liberal US state, my life-saving abortion cost \\$55,000,"](#) *The Guardian*

["In Florida, these Black women see the fight for abortion access as part of a greater struggle for their safety,"](#) *19th News*

["In Oklahoma, a woman was told to wait until she's 'crashing' for abortion care,"](#) *NPR*

["IVF made me a mom. Abortion ban bills could take that option from others,"](#) *USA Today*

["Out-of-staters are flocking to places where abortions are easier to get,"](#) *NPR*

["Planned Parenthood sues Kansas over abortion reversal claims,"](#) *Reuters*

["Rebuilding a Reproductive Future Informed by Disability and Reproductive Justice,"](#) *Women's Health Issues*

["Tori Bowie's Death Shows the Severity of Our Maternal Mortality Crisis,"](#) *Capital B News*

["Woman says she was forced to travel for an abortion despite her fetus's fatal condition,"](#) *ABC News*

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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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