

September 10, 2021

ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL FILES BRIEF OPPOSING SOUTH CAROLINA ABORTION LAW

Raoul, 20 Attorneys General Argue South Carolina’s “Fetal Heartbeat” Abortion Regulations Detrimental to Women’s Health Care

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul, as part of a coalition of 21 attorneys general, filed an amicus brief in *Planned Parenthood South Atlantic v. Wilson*, arguing that South Carolina’s “fetal heartbeat” abortion regulations are detrimental to women’s health care as a whole, and that a lower court’s ruling blocking the law should be upheld. Additionally, Raoul and the coalition argue that the collective impact of numerous states across the country enacting restrictive abortion laws, or eliminating access to abortions, harms health care nationwide.

“South Carolina’s law prevents women from accessing essential medical care, potentially resulting in permanent long-term health impacts or even fatalities,” Raoul said. “The restrictive laws being enacted by states like South Carolina do not stop abortions. They jeopardize women’s lives by making it more difficult to receive safe abortions. Women have the right to make their own decisions about abortion care in consultation with their health care providers, and I will continue to oppose measures that deprive them of that right.”

In February 2021, South Carolina passed the South Carolina Fetal Heartbeat and Protection from Abortion Act that prohibits abortions upon the detection of an embryonic or fetal heartbeat, effectively banning abortion after six weeks. Immediately following the law’s passage, Planned Parenthood South Atlantic filed a lawsuit seeking a temporary injunction, which the federal district court granted.

[In the amicus brief](#), Raoul and the coalition argue that access to safe and legal abortion is an essential component of women’s health care and that restrictive abortion laws, like the South Carolina Fetal Heartbeat and Protection from Abortion Act, lead to worsened health outcomes for women. Raoul and the coalition also argue that laws banning abortion after the detection of a fetal heartbeat have harmful spillover effects on miscarriage treatment and other health care needs.

Additionally, Raoul and the attorneys general argue that the restrictions the law places on women could impact residents of neighboring states as well as those states’ health care systems, explaining, “South Carolina’s restrictive abortion laws will cause its citizens to seek abortion care in [neighboring states], potentially straining their healthcare systems.” Raoul and the attorneys general also write that numerous states across the country have passed similar legislation, and that if access to safe and lawful abortions were banned in large geographic portions of the country, it would create “abortion deserts” in which access to abortion care may be unobtainable for many people due to the obstacles created by the sheer distance from lawful abortion care.

Joining Raoul in filing the amicus brief are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and Washington.