



Center for Nonviolence

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CfN Statement on TXSB8

The Center for Nonviolence stands with women, girls, and pregnant persons who want to exercise their constitutional right to access safe, affordable reproductive healthcare. Laws like Texas Senate Bill 8 restrict this access, violate long-established constitutionally protected rights, and put women, girls, and pregnant persons at increased risk for harm. Additionally, it will disproportionately impact Black and Brown women and women living in poverty.

TXSB8 makes the termination of a pregnancy illegal at six weeks (before most pregnant persons know they're pregnant) and offers a \$10k reward to anyone with information about a person seeking reproductive healthcare or a person providing such care. This is the most egregious aspect of the bill because it literally places a bounty on the heads of pregnant Texans and stokes already widening cultural and political divisions.

Most concerning, however, is the chilling effect this law will have on victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence. TXSB8 targets victims and survivors in a way that virtually guarantees increased rates of domestic, sexual, and other forms of violence. For example, research by the UCSF Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health shows that DV survivors who were prevented from accessing reproductive healthcare and, as a result, were forced to carry a fetus to term, were more likely to remain in abusive relationships over the next two and half years after learning they were pregnant, compared to women who were able to access reproductive healthcare. Children who witness and experience violence are more likely to have compound trauma, score high on ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) tests, and go on to replicate (or become victims of) violence later in life, which furthers the cycle of generational trauma and violence.

Furthermore, the longitudinal "Turnaway Study," which looks at the long-term effects of unwanted pregnancies, found that 95% of women surveyed five years after termination were not more likely to experience adverse psychological effects than those who chose to carry a pregnancy to term and, in fact, were at peace with their decision. This belies one of the primary justifications for bills like TXSB: that women, girls, and pregnant persons do not have the mental or emotional capacity to make their own reproductive healthcare decisions and will be psychologically scarred by their choices.

We envision homes, communities, and a world free of violence and oppression.

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Recently, State Senator, Liz Brown, announced plans to introduce similar legislation in Indiana, arguing that women's reproductive rights should fall under the purview of "states rights." Brown's bill could be introduced as early as January 2022 when the next regular sessions resume.

Regardless of where one stands on the issue of reproductive rights, TXSB8 is the kind of law that represents a slow creep towards authoritarianism and a diminishing of the promise of freedom, liberty, and democracy for women, girls, people of color, queer people, and others who are systemically pushed to the margins of our society. As efforts to pass similar legislation ramp up across the country, we call on Indiana legislators to protect the constitutional and reproductive rights of Hoosier women, girls, and pregnant persons and vote against measures that Brown and others will bring forward in the upcoming year.

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