

Texas Abortion Law Goes Under Supreme Court Microscope

A majority of the Supreme Court signaled Monday they would allow abortion providers to pursue a court challenge to a Texas law that has virtually ended abortion in the nation's second-largest state after six weeks of pregnancy.

But it was unclear how quickly the court would rule and whether it would issue an order blocking the law that has been in effect for two months, or require providers to ask a lower court put the law on hold.

The nation's highest court began hearings Monday on two separate challenges to the Texas Heartbeat Act, a law that has caused quite a bit of stir within the Biden administration and those fighting to defend abortion in America.

Whole Women's Health and the U.S. Department of Justice have both cited the law, which went into effect on Sept. 1 and bans abortions after cardiac activity is detected in a baby as "unconstitutional." The ban can come into effect as early as six weeks after conception, and the law allows private citizens to sue anyone who helps a person get an abortion after six weeks of pregnancy.

The law was briefly interrupted in October by a lower court that blocked it for 48 hours, but that ruling was quickly overturned. Since the new legislation was put into effect, the number of legal abortions in Texas has fallen by 50 percent.

As many as 12 other state legislatures have voted on similar bans on abortion in early pregnancy. However, no other state besides Texas has been able to get the legislation passed into law.

The structure of the Texas law threatens abortion providers

with huge financial penalties if they violate it. Clinics throughout the state have stopped performing abortions once cardiac activity is found, has reported.

As a result, both the providers and the Biden administration have defiantly proclaimed that women who are financially able to travel to other states and those without the means must continue their pregnancies against their will or find other potentially dangerous ways to end them.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments in a Mississippi abortion case, Dobbs vs. Jackson Women's Health Organization , challenging Roe v. Wade, which has been in effect since 1973, beginning on Dec. 1. {eo}

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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