

There is Still a Heartbeat in Texas Abortion Ban

The vote is in to reinstate the controversial “fetal heartbeat” abortion law in Texas, after it was briefly suspended this week.

According to several media outlets, the decision was made Friday to revoke the suspension of the law on Wednesday from the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The law, which bans abortion after a fetal heartbeat is detected, usually at the six week-mark of pregnancy, had been briefly suspended by U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman Wednesday, calling the law an “offensive deprivation” for a woman’s reproductive rights, according to AP News.

Texas attorney Ken Paxton, who appealed the lower court’s decision to suspend, claimed victory on Twitter Friday night, stating, “The Fifth Circuit has granted an administrative stay on #SB8. I will fight federal overreach at every turn.” He earlier stated that the reason the abortion ban will stay is because it was “passed by the elected representatives of the state of Texas.”

Even with the 48 hours to perform abortions, several doctors refused to administer services out of concern that, with the law in legal limbo, they didn’t want to be involved in lawsuits or legal charges from the state if the law is reinstated later on. A secondary aspect of the law is that private citizens can file lawsuits against abortion clinics and staff if they performed or assisted in an abortion.

The lawsuit to suspend the abortion ban had originally been brought on by the Biden administration, citing that, if this law succeeded in Texas, more GOP-controlled states will also adopt the restrictive law.

There were currently two dozen abortion clinics in Texas before the abortion ban took affect on September 1. According to the Center for Reproductive Rights, six of those clinics had resumed services by Thursday and were preparing to take on more patients before the reinstatement. Some patients had gone to neighboring Oklahoma to get abortions but found that the state is also adopting similar measures against abortion services as well. Oklahoma's ban consists of five state laws that restrict and ban abortion services and will take effect on November 1.

Planned Parenthood stated that, in the first two weeks of the law effective in Texas, there have been an 80% decrease in patients at Texas abortion clinics.

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