

This State Will Be the First to Vote on the Future of Abortion

Tensions are rising across the state and the nation as the topic of abortion continues to make waves following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

"Right now, we are on the trajectory towards unlimited, unrestricted abortion in Kansas," said Danielle Underwood with Kansans For Life. But in the matter of days Kansans will have the opportunity to change that future.

Kansas will be the first state to vote on a constitutional amendment on the August 2 ballot. The "Value Them Both" constitutional amendment, if passed, will hand the power back to the citizens to decide what the future of abortion rights will look like in the state.

Many residents see this as a victory—praying that if the amendment is passed, citizens will have more control over what abortion restrictions look like in their state, and what their tax dollars are going to.

The amendment has left some confusion with residents debating on what the passing of the amendment means for the state, but politicians are now looking to clarify before the critical upcoming vote.

The constitutional amendment proposed would create a new section in the Kansas Bill of Rights concerning the regulation of abortion, the bill itself will not ban abortions. Abortion is restricted after 22 weeks in Kansas, but now with the potential passing of the amendment, abortion clinics will be required to meet safety standards.

If residents vote yes, their decision would mean the state would not be required to fund abortion as well as impose new restrictions on abortion. This would not affect a physician's ability to provide care for women who experience ectopic pregnancies or miscarriages. In the Kansas Department of Health's 2021 Abortion Report, less than 1% of abortions were reported with any physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

If residents vote no, people like Underwood believe that that access to abortion will continue to grow with little to no restrictions across the state.

Currently, abortions are still legal in the state and in 2021 alone 7,849 women terminated their pregnancies according to Kansas Department of Health data. The "Value Them Both" constitutional amendment simply means that Kansans will have the right to legislate abortion through their representatives and not be overruled by courts.

As of 2021, state data shows that nearly half of all abortions in the state of Kansas are from residents from out-of-state, with the majority of abortions from 20 to 29-year-olds.

"Pro-abortion activists are hysterical at the thought of abortion laws and regulations in Kansas being decided by the voters," says political commentator Mike Huckabee. "They are doing everything they can to influence and mislead the people of Kansas with their extreme views. But thanks to the hard work of pro-life advocates, the Value Them Both Amendment gives voters the opportunity to restore the legal foundation for abortion regulations in Kansas.

"I urge the great people of Kansas to vote YES on August 2 to send a clear message that the heartland of America values human life."

Now that the power is back in the hands of the states and residents, Kansas will not be the last to roll out ballot

measures this year to address abortion access. The first major vote with Kansas has the potential to set the tone for what other states do going forward.

California, Kentucky, Montana and Vermont will also be voting on restrictions or protections on the 2022 ballot. {eo}

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