

ADVOCACY

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Talking Points on HB 386 ("Three-Day Delay")

72-hour waiting periods have very little impact on women's decision-making. We trust women to be secure in their decisions to pursue the best healthcare for themselves.

Mandated delays in obtaining care only serve to increase the costs and logistical challenges to patients. These laws disproportionately impact people with limited access to transportation, who live paycheck-to-paycheck and cannot miss additional work, or who are already parents and need to secure childcare.

States that have passed 72 hour waiting periods have spent millions of taxpayer dollars defending these laws, which are not grounded in medical, psychological, or public health best practice. Louisiana should focus on legislation that helps our communities access healthcare.

Statement from the New Orleans Abortion Fund on HB 386

March 31, 2016

Yesterday, the Louisiana House Health and Welfare Committee demonstrated how little they trust the judgement and autonomy of Louisiana women. By voting to impose a 2-visit requirement and 3-day delay between the time a patient first meets with her doctor after deciding to have an abortion, and obtaining the abortion care she needs, House Health and Welfare once again put political ideology over sensible public health and respect for women. The New Orleans Abortion Fund is outraged, but un-surprised given this committee's recurring rejection of the idea that women can be moral decision-makers.

The New Orleans Abortion Fund (NOAF) provides financial assistance to clients who cannot afford the full cost of abortion care. "Our clients are strong, self-assured women who have made the decision to have an abortion after careful consideration of their physical and mental health, family needs and finances, and plans for their educational and employment futures," says Amy Irvin, Executive Director of the New Orleans Abortion Fund. "70% of our clients have children. They are well aware of the impact of pregnancy and parenthood on their lives, without condescending laws forcing them to delay receiving the abortion they have already decided to obtain."

Compelling women to delay their abortion care does almost nothing to change their minds, but it does create logistical and financial challenges. A recent study of the impact of 72-hour waiting periods in Utah found that it had very little impact on women's decision-making. Instead, it led to an increase in the cost of the procedure; the possibility that the clinic will not be able to perform a later abortion; and additional costs related to child care, travel, and missed work and school.

Louisianans seeking abortion deserve better from their lawmakers. In this time of economic insecurity, when our society's safety net is being decimated, placing additional barriers on health care is unnecessary and cruel. We trust Louisianans to carefully consider their options and obtain the care they need. As this bill moves to the Louisiana House of Representatives, we call on our elected officials to trust Louisiana women.

TRAP Laws

March 31, 2016

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