

# [***Donald Trump Has a Huge Florida Headache***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BPF-TC61-JBR6-90M8-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Khaleda Rahman

**Highlight:** The Florida Supreme Court's recent decisions may be consequential for Trump if they drive abortion-rights supporters to the polls.

**Body**

Former president [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), who won Florida in 2016 and 2020, may face a bigger challenge in winning the state in 2024 after the Florida [*Supreme Court*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/supreme-court?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) upheld a 15-week ban on abortions signed by Governor [*Ron DeSantis*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/ron-desantis?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

The April 1 decision means that a more restrictive ban on abortions after six weeks of pregnancy is set to go into effect in 30 days. In a separate ruling, the court also gave the [*green light for a ballot measure*](https://www.newsweek.com/florida-supreme-court-abortion-ruling-divides-desantis-justices-1885749?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) that would enshrine abortion rights in Florida's constitution.

The proposed constitutional amendment due to be on the November ballot says, "No law shall prohibit, penalize, delay, or restrict abortion before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider." The abortion question is expected to appear on the ballot below the choice for president, [*Senate*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/senate?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and other down-ballot races.

The court's decisions could prove consequential in the 2024 election if they end up driving supporters of abortion rights to the polls.

In recent years, abortion rights have galvanized voters, with polls consistently showing that most Americans believe abortion should be legal through the initial stages of pregnancy.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* in 2022, voters in every state with an abortion-related ballot measure [*have supported abortion rights*](https://www.newsweek.com/anti-abortion-movement-setbacks-multiple-states-1818519?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

While Trump is favored to win Florida, he will undoubtedly face attacks from President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s campaign on the issue of abortion in the months leading up to the election.

Trump, the presumptive [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) presidential nominee, will likely be pressed on Florida's abortion bans and on how Floridians should vote on the proposed constitutional amendment.

The Republican Party of Florida [*posted on X*](https://twitter.com/FloridaGOP/status/1774895963951288636), formerly [*Twitter*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/twitter?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), that it would "fight to inform voters about the dangers of the amendment."

In a statement to *Newsweek*, Brian Hughes, a senior adviser to the Trump campaign, said, "President Trump supports preserving life but has also made clear that he supports states' rights because he supports the voters' right to make decisions for themselves.

"Where President Trump thinks voters should have the last word, Biden and many [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) want to allow abortion up until the moment of birth and force taxpayers to pay for it," Hughes added.

"Trump knows that abortion is an electoral drag on [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), which is why he's been downplaying the issue on the campaign trail," Thomas Gift, an associate professor of political science and the director of the Centre on U.S. ***Politics*** at University College London, told *Newsweek*.

"That doesn't mean he's abandoning pro-life constituencies, but it does mean he doesn't want to make abortion a marquee plank of his policy agenda," Gift added.

Julie Chavez Rodriguez, Biden's campaign manager, issued a memo about Florida on April 1, saying the state was now winnable for Biden.

"As we've seen in election after election, protecting abortion rights is mobilizing a diverse and growing segment of voters to help buoy Democrats up and down the ballot," the memo said. "With an abortion amendment officially on the ballot this November in Florida, President Biden and Vice President Harris and their commitment to fighting back against Donald Trump and [*Rick Scott*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/rick-scott?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s attacks on reproductive freedom will help mobilize and expand the electorate in the state, given the overwhelming majority of Floridians support abortion rights. And Florida Republicans will be forced to defend their cruel, indefensible support of this abortion ban."

Trump [*has taken credit*](https://www.newsweek.com/trump-attempts-ease-concerns-about-roe-itll-work-out-everybody-1718977?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) for striking down *Roe*, but he has repeatedly warned that extreme positions could cost Republicans at the ballot box. [*He has urged Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/trump-urges-republicans-get-realistic-about-abortion-1828303?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) to support exceptions in cases of rape or incest or to protect the life of the mother—or risk losing elections.

In March, Trump voiced support for a specific limit on abortion, suggesting he would support a national ban on abortions at around 15 weeks of pregnancy.

"We're going to come up with a time, and maybe we could bring the country together on that issue," Trump said while calling into *Sid & Friends in the Morning*, a show on WABC. He added, "The number of weeks now, people are agreeing on 15. And I'm thinking in terms of that. And it'll come out to something that's very reasonable."

*The New York Times* reported in February that Trump told his advisers and allies he favored a ban on abortion after 16 weeks of pregnancy, with exceptions in cases of rape or incest or to save the life of the mother.

Gift said Trump's hope "is that supporting a more moderate position will be less alienating to large swathes of swing voters, particularly women, who have recoiled at more extreme GOP-backed measures across several states."

He continued: "The Evangelical community is likely to give Trump more slack than most GOP candidates on the issue because he's already delivered them their big win: the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, enabled by his appointment of three conservative Supreme Court justices."

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2371310/former-us-president-donald-trump-speaks.jpg)

**Graphic**

Former U.S. President Donald Trump speaks

Spencer Platt/Getty Images

Former U.S. President Donald Trump speaks to the media after attending the wake of slain NYPD Officer Jonathan Diller at the Massapequa Funeral Home on March 28, 2024 in Massapequa, New York. The former president may face a challenge winning Florida in 2024 after the Florida Supreme Court upheld a ban on abortions, and allowed a ballot measure seeking to enshrine abortion rights go to voters in November.

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