

A majority of Americans want abortion to be legal in the first two *trimesters*

If the Alabama legislature gets its way, abortion will soon become illegal there. A doctor *convicted* of performing an abortion could be sentenced to up to 99 years in prison. With no *exemptions* in cases of rape or *incest*, this would be the most restrictive such law in the country.

trimester 三个月；一学期

convict 罪犯；宣告...有罪

exemption 免除；豁免

incest 乱伦

But other states with Republican-controlled legislatures have passed “heartbeat” laws that are almost as absolute — they ban abortion from 6 weeks, at which point many women do not yet realise they are pregnant.

In the abortion argument, both sides long ago drove each other to extremes. The pro-life, *fundamentalist* view behind the Alabama bill is that a *fertilised egg* is no different from a person, and thus should enjoy the same legal rights. Accept that, and what right does a woman have to take a morning-after pill, or to end a pregnancy after a rape? The pro-choice extreme is that any restriction on abortion is an unacceptable attempt by government to control women’s bodies. With debate *gridlocked*, the focus is on the courts.

fundamentalist 原教旨主义者

fertilized egg 受精卵

gridlock 交通阻塞

The latest abortion bills are about two things: preventing women from making a choice that is properly theirs, and getting a challenge to Roe to the Supreme Court where, campaigners hope, they can smoke out the new conservative majority.

Were Alabama’s law to come into force, the price would be paid by women too poor or *browbeaten* to travel to where abortions are legal. Some of them will end up attempting to perform abortions themselves, with drink, drugs or worse.

browbeaten 胆怯的