

No Bans, No Barriers. Pass the MA ROE Act

As COVID-19 spreads across the country, legislators in Texas, Ohio, Iowa, Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Oklahoma are using the virus as an excuse to declare abortion non-essential and thus prohibited.

In most instances, Massachusetts recognizes that abortion is essential health care for people who choose it. However, barriers still exist which disproportionately affect people of color, people with limited means, limited insurance or information, and those who are desperate for relief from abuse.

For example, the Massachusetts 24-week abortion ban prohibits pregnant patients who are diagnosed with a fatal fetal anomaly - usually not detectable before 24 weeks - from terminating the pregnancy here. The procedure is only available in Colorado and New Mexico. Flying across the country to receive care is distressing enough under normal circumstances, and is absolutely unthinkable during a pandemic. And for most, the costs involved are insurmountable.

Passage of the MA ROE Act, S.1209, H.3320, currently in the state Joint Judiciary Committee, will remove all barriers for all people and extend their constitutional right to choose. We must recognize that abortion is health care, and when needed, time is of the essence.

I urge our state legislators to bring these bills to the floor for a vote. Let your state senators and state representatives know that you support this legislation. Do it for all women. Do it for our daughters.