



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Council Member Catherine Ushka and Council Assistant Lynda Foster
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Support of the right to bodily autonomy and support for a person's right to access the full spectrum of reproductive health care services including the right to access abortion regardless of gender identity and expression, documentation status, income or age – Requested by June 18, 2019
DATE: June 11, 2019

SUMMARY:

Resolution in support of the right to bodily autonomy and support for a person's right to access the full spectrum of reproductive health care services including the right to access abortion regardless of gender identity and expression, documentation status, income or age.

The resolution would state that the City of Tacoma:

- (1.) supports the right to bodily autonomy and supports a person's right to access the full spectrum of reproductive health care services including the right to access abortion care regardless of gender identity and expression, documentation status, income or age.
- (2.) does not support any attempt by a state, federal, or local government to restrict, prohibit, or otherwise impede access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care options including abortion care.
- (3.) does not support any attempt of a private or non-profit organization to restrict access by withholding services, information or referrals related to reproductive health care including abortion care.
- (4.) is committed to ensuring the residents of Tacoma have access to the full spectrum of reproductive healthcare services, including abortion care regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, document status or income.
- (5.) remains committed to eliminating abortion stigma, so that everyone who has had an abortion, might have an abortion, or provides abortion care will feel supported, welcome, and safe in Tacoma.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Council Member Ushka

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

- Strengthen and support a safe city with healthy residents.
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

BACKGROUND:

Voters in Washington State have consistently affirmed a woman's right to reproductive freedom and privacy, as demonstrated by the passage of Initiative 120, the Reproductive Privacy Act, in 1991 and by the defeat of Initiative 694, which would have criminalized late-term abortions, in 1998.



Every person needs access to the full range of safe, affordable and comprehensive reproductive health care throughout his/her/their life, including screenings for cancer and sexually transmitted infections, contraceptive services, abortion care, prenatal care, and labor and delivery services.

State governments across the nation are passing laws that effectively ban abortion in those states. Some of these bills would prevent patients from seeking an abortion and threaten doctors with prison time and fines for performing abortions in their capacity as medical professionals. Those bills will have profound negative impacts on the health of residents who are able to become pregnant by effectively eliminating access to all legal abortion services.

Women of color are disproportionately impacted by restrictions to health care and access to abortions. The City's support of Roe v. Wade and opposition to bans on abortion support communities of color in preventing the loss of access of both health care generally and access to abortion.

Access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care options, including abortion care, is vital to public health. Policy makers should focus on supportive services to reduce unintended pregnancies and promote the success of all families by investing in comprehensive sex education, access to contraceptives, and quality affordable childcare, to improve public health.

ISSUE:

Across the nation state governments are introducing and passing laws that effectively ban abortion in those states, putting the health of residents at risk.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City of Tacoma could choose to take no action.

RECOMMENDATION:

City Council approve the resolution in support of the right to bodily autonomy and support for a person's right to access the full spectrum of reproductive health care services including the right to access abortion regardless of gender identity and expression, documentation status, income or age.