



*Last updated 12/03/2024*

## Reproductive Justice Messaging Toolkit

**WHAT:** Resources and messaging to use when talking about abortion care and reproductive rights for policymakers and organizations.

**PURPOSE:** To ensure accurate information is being shared with the public and to provide policymakers and advocacy partners with resources and messaging guidance on abortion related legal issues, policies, and other decisions that impact Maryland, reproductive freedom, and bodily autonomy.

[SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW](#)

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### **SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS TO FOLLOW**

*\*National orgs*

Baltimore Abortion Fund [@BaltimoreFund](#)

Partners in Abortion Care [@PartnersClinic](#)

Forward Midwifery [@forwardmidwifery](#)

Planned Parenthood of Maryland [@PPMaryland](#) [@PPADMV](#)

Advance Maryland [@AdvanceMaryland](#)

\*National Network of Abortion Funds [@AbortionFunds](#)

\*NARAL Pro-Choice America [@NARAL](#)

\*National Abortion Federation [@NatAbortionFed](#)

\*Center for Reproductive Rights [@ReproRights](#)

\*Physicians for Reproductive Health [@prhdocs](#)

### **EXTERNAL RESOURCES**

- **Skrmetti** [talking points that center on trans rights](#) (November, 2024)
- Messaging on broader implications of [Skrmetti on reproductive rights](#) (November, 2024)
- [Ten Actions Dems Can Take on Abortion Before Trump Takes Office](#) (November, 2024)
- [EMTALA SCOTUS case toolkit](#) (April, 2024)
- [Gutmacher state by state abortion statistics](#)

## MESSAGING ON ABORTION CARE

- Diverse, authentic messengers are key
- People respond better to messaging that starts with **values statements**, and that mobilize people to take action. They do not respond to deficit model messaging or blaming “anti choice judges” “extremist politicians” or soft statements.
- We must share our vision and values strongly and proactively. Effective messaging includes:
  - Core messaging – attacking abortion care is attacking our communities. Everyone deserves the right to make their own decisions about their life, family, and safety. Barriers and political interference are unacceptable. We must fight back.
  - Vision – freedom, justice, health
  - Problem – abortion bans, other restrictive policies
  - Solution – call for a specific solution
- Emphasize the safety and health of people, especially young people, as primary concerns. These values resonate strongly with people.
- Freedom and autonomy messages test highest with men and swing voters, fundamental right messaging tests best with pro-choice voters.
- **Values-based, positive messages around freedom and access to care is the most effective; messaging around the potential criminalization of doctors also effective**
- When it comes to criminalization messaging, bridging the “believability gap” is key; voters need to understand that people can be criminalized for having abortions AND helping others have abortions
- Emphasize that abortion care is safe, everyone deserves to have support from friends and loved ones in getting an abortion, everyone - especially young people - need care and compassion, not criminalization. “Build a World Without Abortion Criminalization” is especially effective; more values-based, positive messaging.
- Highlight that the racist double standard in our legal system means young people, people of color, immigrants, and queer and trans people are most likely to be arrested for self-managing an abortion.
- Support is unchanged for “ban” vs. “restrictions”
- Support is unchanged for “medication abortion” vs. “the abortion pill”
- **Don’t:**
  - **Get too into the weeds on policy or medical details – just use values oriented messaging**
  - **Repeat opposition’s language – use proactive, values based, not stigmatizing messaging**
  - **Discuss when abortion should be banned (after what week, circumstances), give any validity to limits on gestational bans or waiting periods – say that health should dictate medical decisions, and ultimately, what abortion opponents want is an outright ban on abortion, and these are tools to get there.**
  - **Use “Roe” “choice” or “reproductive rights” instead of the word abortion – just say abortion. We must break the stigma.**

- When responding to misinformation:
  - Don't repeat, just call out the opposition and highlight their goal or a total ban on abortion.
  - Point out the impact on people's lives.
  - Bring the conversation back to your values and the need to safeguard abortion access.
- [A Messaging Guide for Abortion Activists](#) from the Baltimore Abortion Fund and Pro Choice Maryland, July 2023

## TALKING POINTS: MIFEPRISTONE AND SELF MANAGED MEDICATION ABORTION

- Bans Off Our Bodies: *"On June 13th, 2024, the U.S. Supreme Court (SCOTUS) unanimously ruled that a group of anti-abortion physicians does not have standing to challenge the FDA's actions related to the approval of mifepristone. Mifepristone will remain on the market and accessible in states where abortion is legal. However, this attack on medication abortion could continue, as the case will be sent back down to federal district court judge Matthew Kacsmaryk, who has already allowed the states of Kansas, Missouri, and Idaho to intervene in the case."*
- On March 26th, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA, a case which could potentially restrict access to mifepristone, one of two abortion pills. Though the Court can issue a decision at any time, we are not expecting a decision until the summer based on the timing of previous rulings. **For now, nothing is changing. Medication abortion with mifepristone remains legal in Maryland, and has always been a safe and effective way to end a pregnancy.**
- Medication abortion care is safe and effective.
- Mifepristone is **one of two** medications that can be used for medication abortion care; there is also **misoprostol**.
  - Misoprostol will remain available even if mifepristone is pulled from the market.
  - Misoprostol, used alone, is safe and effective.
- **Do not:**
  - Undermine the safety and efficacy of a misoprostol only protocol.
  - Say abortions will be unsafe, or reference outdated imagery of "back alley abortions," coathangers, etc... People will still have access to medication abortion and we don't want them to be afraid that other options are not safe. This could lead to a delay in seeking abortion care.
- Even though most voters don't know what "medication abortion" or the "abortion pill" is, they still strongly support it
  - This is why accurate messaging is important.
  - Most voters are unaware that there are threats to medication abortion, but once they learn of the threat, they want to see action from their representatives at all levels of government.
- [Advance Maryland Mifepristone Toolkit](#) Updated 4/24/24

- Bans Off Our Bodies [Mifepristone case toolkit](#) (June, 2024)
- [PPFA Toolkit](#) with updated talking points as of 4/23
- [Physicians for Reproductive Health Toolkit](#) with updated talking points as of 12/23

## [Out of Date] IMPORTANT POLLING TAKEAWAYS

- **Maryland Polling - [PRRI, 2023](#)**
  - Only 5% of Marylanders believe abortion should be illegal in all cases
  - 73% of Marylanders say abortion to be legal in most or all cases.
- **National Polling**
  - A year and a half after Dobbs (November 2023), [66% of registered voters oppose the 2022 Supreme Court decision](#) to overturn Roe v. Wade (Marquette Law School, 11/2-7/2023). This is a [five percent increase from the results found in an NBC poll](#) in June 2023.
  - [Eighty-three percent of U.S. adults](#) feel it is important for 2024 presidential candidates to talk about abortion, 52% feel like it is very important.
  - Among those who are registered to vote or planning to register to vote, a [56% majority believe a candidate's position on abortion is just one of many important factors](#). Eighteen percent said abortion is not an important factor in their vote choice.
  - When asked which “limit on abortion comes closest to your view” for a national law, [59% of U.S. adults support “limiting” abortion to 15 weeks or earlier. Thirteen percent support a 24-week ban and 25% think abortion should be allowed at any time during a pregnancy.](#)
  - [64% of Americans would vote to affirm the right to an abortion in their state constitution](#), including 84% of Democrats, 58% of Independents and 44% of Republicans.
  - [Fifty-seven percent of likely voters](#) support providing medication abortion by mail.
  - [Prosecuting patients who receive abortions and doctors who perform them is deeply unpopular.](#)
    - 73% of voters oppose prosecuting patients who receive abortions - including 83% of Democrats, 70% of Independents, and 64% of Republicans.
    - 66% of voters oppose prosecuting doctors who perform abortions, including 81% of Democrats, 63% of Independents, and 50% of Republicans.
  - [A nationwide ban on abortion is also deeply unpopular.](#) 67% of voters oppose, including 83% of Democrats, 68% of Independents, and 49% of Republicans.
  - National polling consistently shows support for medication abortion/the abortion pill remaining legal. 68% support in LRP Polling, Sept 2022, 65% support in Ipsos polling, Feb 2023.
  - Nationally, voters don’t want courts to overturn the FDA’s approval of mifepristone.

\*\*For more information on messaging or polling, please contact [alice@advancemaryland.org](mailto:alice@advancemaryland.org)