



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Following Dobbs Oral Arguments, Rep. Maloney, Gloria Steinem, Senator Brian Kavanagh, Senator Ramos, Councilwoman Rivera, Councilwoman Caban, Councilmember-elect Marte, and Advocates Call for Reproductive Justice and Health Equity

BRIAN KAVANAGH December 7, 2021

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*New York, NY* – Today, Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-12), Gloria Steinem, Senator Brian Kavanagh, Senator Jessica Ramos, Councilwoman Carlina Rivera, Councilwoman Tiffany Caban, Councilmember-elect Christopher Marte, and advocates stood together at Planned Parenthood Manhattan to call for reproductive justice and health equity as individuals' access to abortion and contraception are under attack across the country. This took place against the backdrop of the *Dobbs* Supreme Court case over Mississippi's fifteen-week abortion ban, ongoing litigation regarding Texas's six-week abortion ban, and efforts to expand refusals of health care, including abortion care and contraception.

As a longtime, national leader on reproductive rights, Congresswoman Maloney has used her position as Chairwoman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform to hold accountable those who are bulldozing reproductive rights and to push for bold action to protect and expand reproductive rights and health care access. In August, Congresswoman Maloney led

more than 70 of her Democratic colleagues in introducing a resolution calling for equitable, science-based access to medication abortion care. In September, following Texas's draconian SB8 law taking effect, Congresswoman Maloney held a hearing to examine the threat to abortion rights and access posed by extreme-anti-choice state governments and a Supreme Court that is hostile to reproductive rights. She also voted to pass the Women's Health Protection Act in the House, which would establish a statutory right to abortion care across the country. And recently, she re-introduced her Access to Birth Control Act to address birth control refusals by pharmacy employees and to guarantee patients' timely access to contraception—a bill she introduced in the House with almost 100 original Democratic co-sponsors as well as Senate-side support.

“Reproductive rights are no longer being chipped away at; they are being bulldozed straight into the ground,” said **Rep. Maloney**. “Women aren't full citizens—and there is no democracy—if we can't control our own bodies. The time for action—for a bold platform to fight back against this conservative assault on reproductive rights—is now. We must fight for reproductive justice by protecting and expanding access to abortion, birth control, and all forms of reproductive health care.”

“There are 23 full democracies in the world, and America is the only one that excludes women from the constitution. This is a global shame and the majority of Americans want and assume women in the constitution, but that won't come true with the Equal Rights Amendment,” said **Gloria Steinem**.

"No matter what happens at the Supreme Court, PPGNY intends to be here for everyone who needs us. No matter where they live. No one should have to leave their community to

access abortion care. As an abortion provider in NYC, I already see patients who travel from Texas and other states to access abortion. As we know, many people do not have the resources to travel for health care due to economic injustices and systemic racism. We cannot be complacent and hope the courts will protect us while abortion access hangs on by a thread. Congress must take bold action and pass the Women's Health Protection Act and the Access to Birth Control Act," said **Gillian Dean, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Planned Parenthood of Greater New York.**

"We passed the Reproductive Health Act to make sure that the reproductive rights originally established through landmark court rulings like Roe v Wade are guaranteed by statute here in New York," said **State Senator Brian Kavanagh.** "Unfortunately many other states are working hard to undermine those rights and severely restrict access to safe, legal abortions. I thank Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney for her unflagging leadership in championing these basic rights, as she has for so long."

"When we finally won a true Democratic majority in the NYS Senate, New York was able to set a standard of leadership for the rest of the country, codifying Roe in the Reproductive Health Act. Now we have a majority in the House and Senate, a supermajority in the State Senate and Assembly, and a supermajority in the NYC Council. Defending reproductive justice and access to healthcare is not something we can delegate to one branch of government, it's all of our responsibilities," said **State Senator Jessica Ramos.**

"As the fate of reproductive rights hangs in the balance, New York has a responsibility to step up in this moment and be a national leader in expanding abortion access. Reproductive justice is more than securing the right to abortion – it is about breaking down systemic

roadblocks to accessing that right, by creating laws that remove social & economic barriers to all kinds of reproductive care. For this reason, I sponsor legislation to create the New York Abortion Access Fund which aims to support New Yorkers and individuals traveling from other states who face financial and logistical barriers to abortion and reproductive healthcare. I am proud to stand today with my colleagues in government to make clear New York State will always protect the right to an abortion,” said **State Senator Alessandra Biaggi**.

“When we defend reproductive freedom, we do it for everyone – not just for the residents of our own districts, towns, and cities. We cannot and will not stand by while reproductive rights are under attack. We must continue to fight for comprehensive reproductive justice that centers equitable care access for women, the LGBTQ+ community, and all pregnant individuals,” said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**. “The impetus is clear – local governments nationwide, not just in progressive strongholds like us here in New York City, can and should be working right now to build the necessary infrastructure to protect reproductive healthcare.”

“The core of the fight for reproductive justice is the same as all of our liberation struggles. It is about freedom from control, coercion, and exploitation - namely of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities. If banning abortions were about genuine care for human life, then the same people trying to take away our reproductive rights would also be fighting just as hard to give people the resources to parent. You can’t separate this fight from the Black mortality rate, the pipelines to mass incarceration, and deportation. These are all reproductive justice issues. We need access to affirming, free and safe abortion care as a human right,” said **Councilwoman Tiffany Caban**.

"Make no mistake, the future of reproductive freedom in the United States is in grave and imminent danger. Federal protection for this fundamental human right may soon come to an end. Women's political activism has never been more important. As voters, we can send a clear and loud message at the ballot box that our rights to full autonomy, to deciding when to become parents is non-negotiable. We also demand access to this healthcare, expanded birth control, affordable childcare, and protections for pregnant workers," said **Sonia Ossorio, President of the National Organization for Women in New York.**

"The women of America hear this loud and clear message: we do not matter. When a constitutional right relied upon for a half a century could be summarily withdrawn, we are confronted once again with how precarious our rights and protections are. We were intentionally left out of the Constitution. The Equal Rights Amendment may be the only thing that can save us. The Senate must vote now to remove the time limit on the ERA to let the women of this country know we all are, indeed, equal under the law," said **Carol Jenkins, President and CEO, The ERA Coalition/Fund for Women's Equality.**

"For NCJW, reproductive freedom is religious freedom. Those who invoke "religious liberty" to block access to contraception and abortion are violating our Constitutional rights," said **Andrea Salwen Kopel, President, National Center of Jewish Women New York (NCJW NY).**

"Catholic social justice values compel us to advance reproductive justice and health equity -- from abortion care, to gender-affirming health services, to birth control and more. People of faith in the halls of Congress and in the pews have a moral responsibility to speak out against the extreme fringe beliefs of the so-called Religious Right and declare that reproductive justice is a blessing. As President of Catholics for Choice, I'm honored to join

Chairwoman Maloney and her pro-choice colleagues on behalf of the faithful majority of Catholics in the U.S. who support abortion access, birth control, and bodily autonomy,” said **Jamie L. Manson, President of Catholics for Choice.**

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