



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Lea Webb

## Senator Lea Webb Statement on Northern District of Texas Decision Regarding FDA Approval of Mifepristone

LEA WEBB April 7, 2023

| ISSUE: **ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE**

Albany, NY - As another senseless attack on abortion access reverberates throughout the US, Senator Lea Webb continues to stand in strong opposition to any rollbacks and affirms that all abortion methods are legitimate forms of health care. In light of the decision from the Northern District of Texas that challenges the FDA's approval of Mifepristone, New York State is once again prepared to assist those who are targeted by this assault on our most personal freedoms. Mifepristone is a safe, effective, abortion medication that has been approved for over two decades in the United States and could be easily obtained in pharmacies for years. For those who cannot access a clinic, face monetary constraints, or are at risk for domestic violence, this is a particularly life-saving option. Thanks to efforts by the Senate Democratic Conference, the Empire State will defend the abortion provisions currently in place, and protect the critical resources needed for those seeking care.

Senator Lea Webb said, "As Chair of the Women's Issues Committee, and as a representative of many rural and underserved communities in the Southern Tier, I understand how increased abortion access is non-negotiable. These rollbacks do nothing to reduce unwanted pregnancies or abortions; they simply make them more dangerous and untenable for people

who are pregnant. Medication abortion now accounts for over half of all abortions in the country and continues to be the easiest method of termination. It allows people to control their reproductive health early, quickly, and with very few barriers. That's why it's crucial that we continue our fight to expand access and support the providers and individuals who are impacted by the Texas ruling. I am proud of my recent legislation that would continue safeguarding all forms of reproductive care, keep family planning in the right hands, and strengthen New York's role as a safe harbor for those across the nation seeking help. This ruling will not deter us. It will only embolden our pro-choice actions going forward."

Senator Webb and the Senate Majority recently sponsored legislation to protect women's health and increase access to reproductive care, including:

**Equal Rights Amendment:** This concurrent resolution, [S108A](#), sponsored by Senator Liz Krueger, adds new anti-discrimination protections to the New York State Constitution, including explicit guarantees for reproductive rights and marriage equality. The State Constitution's Equal Protection Clause already prohibits discrimination because of race, color, creed, and religion. This constitutional amendment adds new protected classes to that list: ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex, which includes sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare and autonomy. The Senate Majority first passed this measure in June 2022 after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. This amendment will now go to voters for ratification in the November 2024 general election.

**Health Equity Assessments:** This bill, [S3609A](#), sponsored by Women's Issues Committee Chair, Senator Lea Webb, enhances the scope of health equity impact assessments to require consideration of the impact a project will have on the availability and provision of reproductive health services and maternal health care.

Facilitating Access of Self-Administered Birth Control: This bill, [S1043](#), sponsored by Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, authorizes pharmacists to dispense self-administered hormonal contraception from a non-patient specific order written by a licensed physician or certified nurse practitioner, allowing women to bypass the challenges of obtaining medical appointments at offices with limited hours or inconvenient locations.

Protection for Healthcare Providers: This bill, [S1066](#), sponsored by Senator Shelley Mayer, expands upon last year's omnibus actions to include broader protections for "reproductive health care" not just termination services so that New York State physicians are able to continue to provide care without fear of retribution.

Community Doula Directory: This bill, [S1867](#), sponsored by Senator Samra Brouk, requires the Department of Health to establish and maintain the New York state community doula directory to promote the use of doula services by Medicaid recipients and reimbursement for doula services in the Medicaid program. It also establishes criteria for admittance into the New York state community doula directory.

Special Enrollment Period Protections: This bill, [S201](#), sponsored by Senator Cordell Cleare, bars a plan or contract from imposing a fee or other penalty for a pregnant individual enrolling during a special enrollment period.

Uterine Fibroid Awareness Campaign: This bill, [S3219](#), sponsored by Senator Cordell Cleare, directs the Department of Health to establish and run a public awareness and education campaign on the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of uterine fibroids and the elevated risk for the condition within women of minority populations.

Establishing the Reproductive Freedom and Equity Program: This bill, [S348](#), sponsored by Senator Cordell Cleare, establishes a grant program within the Department of Health to

build reproductive healthcare provider capacity within the state, fund uncompensated care, and provide financial support to organizations providing practical support to individuals within and traveling to the State.

#####