



May 9, 2022

United State Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals that champions the health of all people and communities, I write in strong support of S. 4132, the Women's Health Protection Act of 2022.

APHA has long advocated for access to the full range of reproductive health services, including abortion, as a fundamental right. APHA's recommendations that abortion be readily available, un-delayed, unburdened by psychiatric consultation and supported by appropriately trained providers were cited in the original *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. That history of advocacy for a person's right to make decisions about their own body has continued to 2022, with APHA submitting a brief in the active Supreme Court case *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, presenting overwhelming objective evidence that abortion is a necessary tool in promoting health and mitigating health threats and arguing that the ability to safely and legally terminate a pregnancy is both an individual constitutional right and a public health concern.

Evidence tells us that access to safe abortion is a key factor in preventing deaths and disability among pregnant people due to pregnancy-related causes. State-level attacks that restrict abortion access lead to worse pregnancy-related health outcomes, further health equity gaps by race, ethnicity, income and location and increase the economic costs associated with exacerbated inequity. So far, 2022 has been rife with attacks on abortion access - from January to April, 42 state legislatures introduced 536 bills restricting abortions, with 33 of those bills successfully becoming enacted in 9 states. Furthermore, the upcoming Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* will decide the future of *Roe v. Wade*, which has protected the right to abortion for decades.

Now, more than ever, the right to abortion needs to be codified in federal law. The Women's Health Protection Act of 2022 would create a statutory right at the federal level for abortion providers to provide abortion care and for patients to receive it, invalidating state-level attacks and protecting the right to abortion from court threats such as the potential overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. I urge the Senate to pass S. 4132 when it comes to the floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Georges C. Benjamin'.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD
Executive Director