

Judge Allows 18-Week Abortions To Continue As New Law is Litigated

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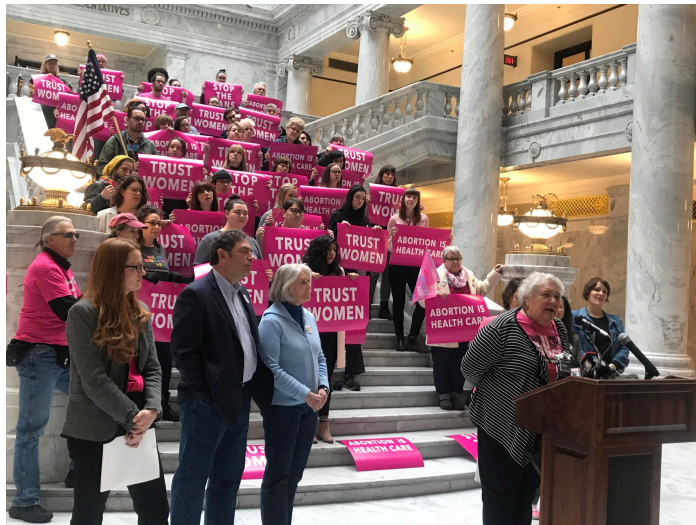
By Nicole Nixon

<https://www.kuer.org/post/judge-allows-18-week-abortions-continue-new-law-litigated#stream/0>

A federal judge pressed pause Thursday on an 18-week abortion ban approved by Utah lawmakers earlier this year as the issue is taken up in court.

U.S. District Judge Clark Waddoups granted a preliminary injunction to keep the law from going into effect on May 14.

Planned Parenthood and the ACLU of Utah applauded the move. The two groups had threatened legal action if the legislature approved the law and [filed the lawsuit](#) last week.



“We are extremely pleased with Judge Waddoups’ order protecting Utahns’ ability to access abortion care during the lawsuit,” said Karrie Galloway, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Association of Utah. “This means there will be no disruption in care for the Utah women seeking abortion services at or after 18 weeks.”

[H.B. 136](#) would ban most abortions after 18 weeks’ gestation, with exceptions for rape, incest and the health of the mother. Sponsor Rep. Cheryl Acton, R-West Jordan, had originally proposed a 15-week ban. She said the bill was [motivated in part by the recent conservative shift](#) of the U.S. Supreme Court following two appointments by President Donald Trump.

Abortion rights advocates say the bill unconstitutionally violates access to the procedure.

“We believe today’s injunction is the first positive step of a legal process that will ultimately show, as many courts have already concluded, that attempts to restrict abortion before viability are clearly unconstitutional,” said ACLU Utah Executive Director Brittney Nystrom.

Utah Attorney General Sean Reyes said earlier Thursday that he would not enforce the law while the case moves through the courts, though he said his office looks forward to “vigorously defending” the law.