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## **PLANNED PARENTHOOD ASSOCIATION OF UTAH AND THE ACLU OF UTAH FILE LAWSUIT TO STOP 18-WEEK ABORTION BAN IN UTAH**

SALT LAKE CITY – Today, Planned Parenthood Association of Utah (PPAU) and the ACLU of Utah Federation (ACLU of Utah) filed a lawsuit to stop H.B. 136 – the 18-week abortion ban passed by the Utah legislature and signed into law by Governor Herbert.

The lawsuit was filed today in federal district court and seeks a preliminary injunction to stop H.B. 136 from taking effect. Without the injunction, the law will go into effect on May 14, 2019. The motion requests that the judge rule before that date to ensure Utahns seeking abortion will continue to have access to the care they need.

The ACLU of Utah and Planned Parenthood Association of Utah announced the lawsuit at a press conference at the Utah State Capitol today.

“The ACLU has a long history of defending reproductive freedom and a strong commitment to woman’s health,” said Leah Farrell, senior staff attorney for the ACLU of Utah. “H.B. 136 clearly interferes with a woman’s most personal medical decisions and violates fundamental constitutional principles. The decision to continue or end a pregnancy is one that must be made by a woman in consultation with those she trusts.”

“Politicians have no place in the private, medical decisions of Utah women,” said Karrie Galloway, President and CEO of PPAU. “This unconstitutional ban is clearly part of a broader agenda to ban abortion one law at a time. Just this year, more than 250 abortion restrictions have been introduced in legislatures across the country. Our Utah lawmakers decided they couldn’t be left out of this trend to attempt to chip away at Roe v. Wade. They are willing to

waste hard earned taxpayer dollars to control the private, medical decisions of Utah women. All while doing nearly nothing to actually improve the health of Utahns.”

Laws that ban abortion prior to viability, like H.B. 136, clearly violate a person’s constitutionally protected right to an abortion. The U.S. Supreme Court has held for over 40 years that states may not ban abortion prior to viability. The Court has also made clear that states are prohibited from drawing a line at a particular number of weeks to establish fetal viability. When the Utah Legislature passed a law in the early 1990s to ban abortions 20 weeks after conception, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit ruled it was unconstitutional.

The 18-week ban also adds to the long list of restrictive abortion policies that legislators have already enacted in Utah. For example, Utah already forces people seeking abortion to complete a state-mandated online module and a consultation session designed to discourage people from seeking abortion services, and then wait 72 hours before receiving abortion care.

As a Texas study recently revealed, similar medically unnecessary restrictions can cause delays that force abortion later into pregnancy. These harmful policies also disproportionately impact Utahns who live in rural areas and families who are economically disadvantaged.

[Frequently Asked Questions about the legal challenge to H.B. 136.](#)

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*The ACLU of Utah Foundation, Inc. chartered in 1958 as an affiliate of the national ACLU, operates through public education, legal advocacy, litigation, and lobbying at both the state and local levels to ensure the constitutional rights and freedoms of everyone living in or visiting Utah.*

*Our work is based on those principles outlined in the Bill of Rights and the U.S. Constitution.*

*Find us online at [www.acluutah.org](http://www.acluutah.org)*

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*At Planned Parenthood Association of Utah, we believe that every Utahn deserves to choose their own path to a healthy and meaningful life. For nearly 50 years, we’ve provided high-quality, affordable, and compassionate reproductive health care to thousands of Utah women, men, and their families at eight health centers around the state. For more information, please visit us*

*online at [www.ppau.org](http://www.ppau.org)*