

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2023-1050

TITLE: Resolution Condemning Florida’s Six Week Abortion Ban and Reaffirming the University of Florida’s Commitment to Providing Reproductive and Sexual Health Resources

AUTHOR(S): Senator Simone Liang

SPONSORS: Senate President Pro Tempore Nathan McGinnis, Majority Party Leader Evan E. Rafanan, Deputy Majority Party Leader Navya Nair, Senator Jordan LoSardo, Senator Andrew Taramykin, Senator Anna Huber, Senator Quoc Pham, Senator Nathaniel Pelton, Senator John Lin, Senator Joaquin Rafael C. Marcelino, Senator Anghelo Gangano, Senator Anjali Natarajan, Senator Ana Alvarez

WHEREAS, the Florida State Legislature passed Senate Bill 300, cited as the “Heartbeat Protection Act” on April 13, 2023 [1]; and,

WHEREAS, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed the Heartbeat Protection Act into law on April 13, 2023 [2]; and,

WHEREAS, the Heartbeat Protection Act prevents “physicians from knowingly performing or inducing a termination of pregnancy after the gestational age of the fetus is determined to be more than 6 weeks,” and states that “any person, governmental entity, or educational institution may not expend state funds as defined in s. 215.31 in any manner for a person to travel to another state to receive services that are intended to support an abortion as defined in s. 390.011” [3]; and,

WHEREAS, the Heartbeat Protection Act severely limits patients’ access to critical reproductive health services by considerably decreasing the available time frame in which individuals may obtain an abortion from fifteen weeks to six weeks or pregnancy and by eliminating funds that may be used to support low-income and POC individuals from traveling to another state where such a procedure is legal [4]; and,

WHEREAS, half of abortion patients in the U.S. live with incomes below the federal poverty threshold and 28% of Black women and 25% of Latina women seek abortions while representing only 14% and 21% of all US women aged 15-44, respectfully [5]; and,

WHEREAS, historical and contemporary analyses by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have proven that abortion restrictions do not reduce the rates of abortion, but rather force individuals to resort to unsafe and illegal methods of terminating their pregnancy, “including self-inflicted abdominal and bodily trauma, ingestion of dangerous chemicals, self-medication with a variety of drugs, and reliance on unqualified abortion providers” [6]; and,

WHEREAS, on 12 July 2022, the University of Florida Student Senate previously recognized and supported sexual and reproductive health resources made available at the University of Florida, as well as reaffirmed a “person’s right to sexual and reproductive health” in SSB 2022-1023 [7]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida Student Senate passed SSR 2022-1027 “Student Body Resolution Addressing the Need for 24/7 Access to Emergency Contraception on the University of Florida Campus” on 12 August 2022, which supports the “stocking of emergency contraception at a health and wellness vending machine located on the University of Florida campus that is accessible to students 24/7” [8]; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate condemns the signing of S.B. 300 “Heartbeat Protection Act” into law by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate supports an individual’s right to bodily autonomy and to make critical decisions regarding their reproductive and sexual health freely.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate emphasizes the free sexual health resources provided by GatorWell Health Promotion Services, which includes confidential HIV testing and condoms [9].

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the following gynecological health services offered at the Student Health Care Center: contraceptive and STI prevention counseling, STI screenings and diagnosis, pap smears, pelvic exams, and pregnancy tests [10].

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate encourages UF students to utilize the reproductive and sexual health resources made available to them by GatorWell and the Student Health Care Center.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the installation of a 24/7 health and wellness vending machine on campus that dispenses emergency contraception at reduced cost to students.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, University President Dr. Ben Sasse, Vice President for Student Life Dr. Heather White, UF Student Health Care Interim Director Jocelyn Gravlee, and Gatorwell Health Promotion Services Director Dr. Monica Webb.

[1] <https://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/billsdetail.aspx?BillId=78468&>

- [2] <https://www.flgov.com/2023/04/13/governor-ron-desantis-signs-heartbeat-protection-act/#:~:text=TALLAHASSEE%2C%20Fla.,%2C%E2%80%9D%20said%20Governor%20Ron%20DeSantis>
- [3] <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/300/BillText/er/PDF>
- [4] <https://www.abortionfinder.org/abortion-guides-by-state/abortion-in-florida/abortion-laws>
- [5] <https://www.guttmacher.org/2023/01/inequity-us-abortion-rights-and-access-end-roe-deepeningexisting-divides>
- [6] <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/abortion-u-s-five-key-facts-n889111>
- [7] https://sg.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/R2022-1023_Resolution_Recognizing_and_Supporting_Sexual_and_Reproductive_Health_Resources_and_Opport.pdf
- [8] <https://sg.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-1027-Student-Body-Resolution-Addressingthe-Need-for-24.pdf>
- [9] <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/services/>
- [10] <https://shcc.ufl.edu/services/specialty-care/gyn/>