

FIRST READING: September 03, 2024
SECOND READING/ADOPTION: October 01, 2024

CITY OF MOUNT RAINIER, MARYLAND

Resolution No. 03-2024

INTRODUCED BY: Mayor Celina Benitez

RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
OF MOUNT RAINIER, MARYLAND PROCLAIMING
REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2022, the United States Supreme Court in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* overturned a 50-year precedent set by *Roe v. Wade*, *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, and eliminated the Federal constitutional right to abortion in the United States and subsequently more than a dozen States have passed legal barriers that fully ban abortion, and many others have passed legal barriers that severely restrict abortion; and

WHEREAS, there has been increased risk of criminalization of people seeking abortion and doctor, nurses, and those involved in providing and dispensing reproductive and gender-affirming care; and

WHEREAS, since the overturn of *Roe v. Wade* via the *Dobbs* decision and subsequent bans has forced thousands affected to travel outside state borders to seek care in states such as Maryland where abortion is legal; and

WHEREAS, the access to safe and legal abortion is a Human Right that should be safeguarded and legally protected and no one should be criminalized for any pregnancy outcomes or for providing essential care; and

WHEREAS, pregnant people who have been denied abortion care may be putting their health, fertility, and lives at risk, have been forced to carry nonviable pregnancies to term, or have been criminalized for miscarriage, the circumstances of their pregnancies, abortions, and other pregnancy outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the retrogression on abortion rights in the United States conflicts with the United States’ obligation under international human rights law; and

WHEREAS, we have seen in various countries the effects of criminalizing health care – women forced to carry unviable pregnancies to term at the cost of their health and sometimes lives and women serving decades long sentences for suffering miscarriages – such are the international cases of *Beatriz and others v. El Salvador* and countless women currently serving 30 years or more in jail in El Salvador; and

WHEREAS, treaties ratified by the United States are binding on individual States and are the “supreme Law of the Land” under Clause 2 of Article VI of the Constitution; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous people, Black and Brown people, people of color, people with low incomes, people living in rural areas, people with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and other marginalized individuals are disproportionately likely to be surveilled, arrested, charged, prosecuted, convicted, and heavily punished within the American criminal justice system and, due to systemic discrimination, to experience additional scrutiny from the American legal system; and

WHEREAS, the United States has been reviewed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) – two treaty monitoring bodies - since the Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization decision and the United Nations Human Rights Committee has explicitly recommended that the United States Government at all levels – federal, state and local – uphold human rights obligations under these treaties, including protecting sexual and reproductive health and rights; and

WHEREAS, abortion is legal in the State of Maryland and has been since 1973, and was reaffirmed again by voters in a referendum in 1992; however, a statute can be repealed legislatively without involving the voters, and Dobbs has shown even if abortion is currently legal, it can remain at risk; and

WHEREAS, a constitutional amendment offers the highest form of protection for abortion care in Maryland. Repealing an amendment to the constitution is much more difficult than reversing other types of policy protections for reproductive freedom; and

WHEREAS, Maryland Governor Wes Moore signed into law the Reproductive Freedom Bill Package in 2023 that included: an electronic health record data privacy bill; a shielding bill to protect providers and patients of legal reproductive health care, including abortion from attacks by anti-abortion extremists in other states; a bill requiring 4-year residential public colleges to put in place a plan for students to access comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care, including abortion, STI testing/treatment, contraceptives, and emergency contraceptives; and a constitutional amendment to ensure every person in Maryland has the right to prevent, continue, or end their own pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, the Reproductive Freedom Bill has allowed for a constitutional amendment to be on the ballot in Maryland in November 2024. The decision to prevent pregnancy through contraception, carry a pregnancy to term, or terminate a pregnancy through abortion would only be up to a pregnant person and their health care provider. In the absence of federal legislation, this is the strongest possible protection of the right to reproductive freedom for Maryland residents; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution aligns the Mount Rainier City government with its human rights obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in accordance with Article VI, Clause 2 of Constitution; and

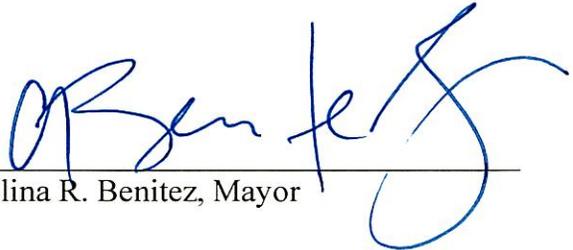
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of Mount Rainier designate June 24, 2024, as Reproductive Rights are Human Rights Day in the City of Mount Rainier.

This Resolution is adopted by the Mayor and Council of the City of Mount Rainier on 1st day of October, 2024.

Attest:



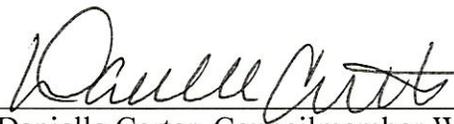
Melissa Sam, City Clerk



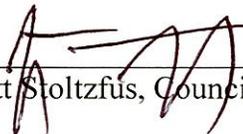
Celina R. Benitez, Mayor



Luke Chesek, Councilmember Ward 1



Danielle Carter, Councilmember Ward 1



Jarrett Stoltzfus, Councilmember Ward 2



Valerie Woodall, Councilmember Ward 2

