

Hello, my name is Isabella Kaufman and I'm from Temple Beth Sholom in Santa Ana, California. Thank you very much for taking the time to meet with us today. We are in Washington this weekend with other teens as part of the Reform Jewish Movement and as a part of the Religious Action Center, which is the legislative office of the Union for Reform Judaism. We would like to discuss the serious issue of women's reproductive rights with you today.

Even though American women have had the legal right to have an abortion since 1973 due to the Supreme Court decision in Roe V. Wade, women in the United States are still struggling to find the medical help they need and the acceptance they deserve. Unfortunately, in 88% of U.S. cities, there are no abortion providers. Some women are unable to receive medical attention due to restricting state laws and anti-choice advocates. Women should have complete, full, and constant access to abortion clinics, medical attention, and desired medicine. Women's income, health care, age, marital status, and race also influence their access to medical assistance. These circumstances should not play a role in a woman's ability to have an abortion as all women should be treated and viewed equally on this topic and should not have any limiting factors that deny their constitutional right. Even though abortion is legal for all women, why are some forced to jump through hoops and deal with unnecessary constricting regulations?

As a Reform Jew, I believe that abortion should be available to everyone and that all women should have a choice and right to their body. The Talmud states that "if a woman's labor becomes life threatening, the one to be born is dismembered in her abdomen...for her life comes before the life of the fetus. Once most of the child has

emerged it is not to be touched, for one soul is not to be put aside for another.” This being said, Reform Jews are pro-choice. Women have control over their own body and should not be told what they can and cannot do with it. The most important thing is the woman’s “health and well-being of [her] bod[y] above all else” as our bodies and souls belong to God. According to Reform Jews, “The state controlling a woman would mean denying her full autonomy and full equality.”

Women should be viewed as equal as men in that they should be the decision maker and “her choice should be controlling.” It is not fair to deny a woman of her “obligation to healthcare” and restrict her rights to her own body.

Hello, my name is Alexis Ablove and I would just like to thank you again for your time. Before this weekend, I was unaware of all the problems our country faces with this issue. I knew about the constant and aggressive Pro-Life vs. Pro-Choice protests; however, I did not know about all the obstacles and hoops women must jump through in order to get the healthcare they need. We did a short stimulation to show how difficult it is for someone to receive aid and an abortion due to their circumstances. Each person was given an identification and had to step forward if they qualified for aid or step back if they were not allowed to receive help. Watching all the people step back was extremely frustrating because they were not being treated fairly in any way, shape, or form. What really hit me was women are restricted from receiving an abortion because they are poor or due to her source of insurance. What happened to women’s rights? How can anyone refuse the right to service to someone who is in need of healthcare? As a teenage girl, the Reproductive Rights subject is a very important topic for me. We must keep women safe and alive - that should be the main priority. Some people can not afford to receive health-

care, let alone raise a child. Especially as a minor, this is a difficult and stressful situation. Certain parent consent requirements have restricted their reproductive rights and placed burdens on abortion access. If a woman, of any age, believes she is incapable of raising a child, we should not force her to go through this situation. Women should have the right to protect their bodies and give it the necessary care it needs. I believe that everyone has a choice in life and should have the ability to make their own decisions.

I urge you to cosponsor the EACH Women Act (H.R. 2972). This bill would eliminate the Hyde Amendment, guaranteeing that every person who receives care or insurance through a federal plan or program will have coverage for abortion. Thank you for your time and I hope you consider our proposal.