Letter to the editor

Radiologists staunchly support patient safety and autonomy, in opposition to the SCOTUS decision to overturn Roe v Wade

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On June 24th 2022 the US Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, overturned Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 ruling that established the constitutional right to abortion.

We are radiologists and medical physicists, many of whom hold or have held leadership roles in our professional community. We are deeply concerned about this erosion of reproductive choice and bodily autonomy across the many States that will now further restrict or even ban access to abortion.

Radiologists are physicians who use medical imaging - such as ultrasound, CT, and MRI - to diagnose and treat disease. We use imaging to monitor pregnancy from start to finish and have perspective on the myriad of issues that can arise, making us qualified to speak on the importance of bodily autonomy and the right to choose whether or not to proceed with a pregnancy.

Diagnostic radiologists are experienced in evaluating post-surgical complications and interventional radiologists are thoroughly trained in minimally invasive techniques to stop uncontrolled bleeding and place drains to treat abscesses. “Today, approximately 21 million women around the world obtain unsafe, illegal abortions each year, and complications from these unsafe procedures account for approximately 13% of all maternal deaths, nearly 50,000 annually.”¹ These are our patients, and their morbidity and mortality is entirely preventable with access to safe and legal abortion.

We support our patients, of all genders, in making their own informed decisions about their healthcare and management. We urge lawmakers and policy makers to ensure access to reproductive health including safe, legal abortion to all who need these essential healthcare services.

Signed
Aditya Karandikar, MD
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Uzma Waheed, MD

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