

Oppose Abortion Methods Ban Petition Drive

Background on anti-abortion petition drives: On May 15th, after Governor Whitmer vowed to veto the anti-abortion legislation introduced in the House and Senate (HB 4320 & 4321 and SB 0229 & 0230), Right to Life of Michigan and the Michigan Heartbeat Coalition filed paperwork to initiate two petition drives to pass identical measures. The Michigan Board of Canvassers approved the petition drive on June 19th. Under the Michigan Constitution, if the initiatives receive roughly 340,000 signatures each, the Republican-led Michigan Legislature can adopt the measures and pass the bill without Governor Whitmer's signature. Right to life has successfully passed four anti-abortion drives before, and Republicans in the Michigan Legislature have signaled their support. Right to Life has already ordered 44,000 petition sheets and is moving quickly to secure the required amount of signatures within the 180 day time span. While most petition drives intend to access the ballot for a statewide vote, this drive's express intent is to circumvent the ballot box and Governor Whitmer's veto. This is an affront on not only a woman's right to choose, but also our democracy.

Why is resisting these anti-abortion petition drives important? Both of these proposals are a gross assault on a woman's reproductive freedom, and measures in the heartbeat ban patently runs afoul of Roe vs. Wade. Right to Life's initiative bans a process known as dilation and evacuation, (inaccurately titled "dismemberment" abortion by opponents). It is considered the safest procedure for second trimester abortions. This procedure usually ensures future fertility, and is considered painless for a fetus that at this gestation period lacks the physical structures for experiencing pain. The initiative put forth by the Michigan Heartbeat Coalition would ban abortions once a heartbeat is detected. Often, a "fetal heartbeat" is recorded around six weeks, before most women are even aware of their pregnancy. The sentencing aspects of both proposals would deter many health practitioners from following their consciences to provide the safest health care available to the woman in need of an abortion. Women should be able to decide with their doctors what is best for them. While the fetal heartbeat ban clearly violates Roe vs. Wade, proponents hope that the influx of heartbeat bills around the country will spur the Supreme Court to review the original decision, and ultimately overturn the ban. These ballot drives are the first step in fully prohibiting abortions not only in our state, but the entire country.

What can we do? We can dissuade potential signees by educating them about the awful proposals included in the initiatives. Already, organizations like Planned Parenthood and the Michigan ACLU are launching campaigns to inform Michiganders about this ongoing assault on a woman's reproductive autonomy. We can help ensure that their efforts are successful by calling as well.

Call Script For Michiganders:

Hello, my name is _____. I'm a volunteer with Michigan Resistance and the Washtenaw County Democratic Party. First, I'm not calling to ask for money. I'm calling to ask for your help. After Governor Whitmer vowed to veto multiple anti-abortion bans proposed by Republican Legislators, pro-life groups initiated two anti-abortion petition drives containing identical measures. One prohibits the safest second-term abortion procedure and the other bans abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, often merely six weeks into a pregnancy. If these drives obtain the requisite amount of signatures, the Republican-led Legislature can pass the bills without Governor Whitmer's signature. This is a gross assault not only on a woman's reproductive rights, but our democracy as the sole intent of this initiative is to evade Governor Whitmer's veto and avoid a likely defeat at the ballot box in 2020. Please do not sign this petition and encourage others to not as well.

Supporting Links:

[Michigan petition drive seeks to ban abortion after fetal heartbeat](#)

[Michigan anti-abortion groups launch ballot drive to ban second trimester procedure](#)