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**NEW YORK CITY FILES AMICUS BRIEF DEFENDING WOMEN’S RIGHT TO ACCESS SAFE
AND LEGAL ABORTION SERVICES**

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Corporation Counsel Zachary W. Carter today announced the City of New York has filed an [amicus brief](#) with the U.S. Supreme Court defending a woman’s right to access safe and legal abortion services.

Filing to reverse an appellate court ruling in *Whole Women’s Health v. Cole*, the City of New York argues that a Texas law forcing the closure of over 75 percent of the abortion clinics in Texas is unconstitutional. As a result of the closures, women in Texas would have to travel hundreds of miles, sometimes even out of state, to obtain safe and legal abortion services.

“No woman should have to leave her home and travel hundreds of miles in pursuit of the basic right to reproductive freedom. New York City strongly supports women’s autonomy and is a place where women can obtain safe and legal abortion services. As our nation looks more and more like the one we thought we had left behind with *Roe v. Wade*, New York City and its partner-cities and local government leaders ask the Supreme Court to remember that the spread of restrictive abortion laws endanger women’s lives and health,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“We have asked the Supreme Court to recognize the hardships and risks to health imposed when women are forced to travel long distances, often out of state, to access an ever dwindling number of in-state clinics that offer reproductive health services that are every woman’s Constitutional right,” said **Corporation Counsel Zachary W. Carter**.

New York City leads a diverse coalition of cities and local government leaders from across the nation to warn the Supreme Court about the dangers of state laws – like the Texas law – that drastically curtail abortion services to women.

Allowing these laws to spread unchecked would roll back women’s rights and make safe, legal abortions available to a select few women who live in the right zip code.

The amicus brief highlights the harms inflicted by the growing number of restrictive abortion measures enacted across the country. These laws have closed, or threaten to close, a record number of abortion clinics throughout the nation. In some states, there is only one facility that offers abortion services. The brief reminds the Court of the tragic conditions that existed before the Court affirmed women’s constitutional right to reproductive choice, and the tragic conditions that will surely follow as access to abortion is curtailed.

Before women’s right to choose was established in *Roe v. Wade*, abortions were available only in a few locations in the United States, like New York City. The lack of services in most parts of the country forced women to have illegal and unsafe abortions, resort to dangerous self-help measures, seek later-term abortions, or carry children to term. Limiting abortion access caused hundreds of thousands of women to travel to the few

jurisdictions where abortion remained accessible, significantly increasing wait times, pushing abortion later into pregnancy and putting women's health at risk. This was a hardship and undue burden on women, especially on poor women, who lack the resources to travel, find and pay for child care and miss work time.

Upholding restrictive abortion laws like the one now before the Supreme Court would once again force women to travel long distances for abortion care unavailable to them locally. Already, tens of thousands of women from across the country travel to amicus cities. The brief demonstrates the amicus cities' commitment to defending abortion access in the courts and, more important, ensuring that women have meaningful access to safe and legal abortion services in the real world.

"As a trusted sexual and reproductive health care provider, Planned Parenthood of New York City knows the devastating consequences for individuals and communities when politicians restrict access to safe medical care. The stakes for access to safe, legal abortion in the United States are higher than ever. A law that forces the majority of abortion providers in Texas to shut their doors would create a world where even though abortion is legal, it is completely out of reach. And it would be especially harmful for low-income people who may not be able to afford the time or the expense to travel long distances for care. Everyone deserves to have control over their own health care decisions and their own futures no matter where they live. Planned Parenthood of New York City applauds our city's leaders for supporting access to safe and legal abortion for not only all New Yorkers, but everyone," said **Joan Malin, President, CEO, Planned Parenthood of New York City**.

"For years, NARAL Pro-Choice New York and the National Institute for Reproductive Health have worked with partners in Texas and across the country to fight medically unnecessary restrictions on abortion care, like those in Texas, that subject abortion providers to a double standard in order to push abortion further out of reach. We're proud to represent the millions of pro-choice women and men across the country and here in New York who understand the urgency in protecting and restoring access to abortion for all women, regardless of where they live," said **Andrea Miller, President, NARAL Pro-Choice New York and the National Institute for Reproductive Health**.

"Restrictive laws being passed in many states, including Texas, are effectively taking away women's rights to choice as guaranteed by Roe v. Wade," said **State Senator Liz Krueger, co-chair of the Bipartisan Pro-Choice Legislative Caucus**. "Women in America will not go back to the days of dangerous underground abortions, and the Supreme Court must take a hard line against these backward-looking laws. I commend Mayor de Blasio, the City of New York, and their allies, for standing up against this attack on women's reproductive health."

"I am glad to see more leaders lending their voices to a powerful chorus that sound medical judgment, not political expediency, should guide all health decisions, particularly those affecting reproductive choices," said **Assembly Member Aravella Simotas, Chair of the Assembly's Task Force on Women's Issues**.

"I applaud Mayor de Blasio for providing an amicus brief to the Supreme Court in support of wide access to reproductive services. The Texas law restricting access by imposing unnecessary requirements on women's health clinics will force women to travel hundreds of miles to receive services. This is clearly unconstitutionally burdensome for many women, especially young and poor women," said **Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick**.

"I applaud Mayor de Blasio for standing in support of women's health," said **Council Member Corey Johnson, Chair of the Committee on Health**. "We stand in solidarity with the women of Texas, many of whom would have to travel hundreds of miles to receive reproductive health care. The assault on women's reproductive health rights must not go unanswered."

"Restricting the right to healthcare, including limiting a woman's options for a safe and legal medical abortion, is unacceptable and dangerous. I support Mayor Bill de Blasio and Corporation Counsel Zachary W. Carter in

their fight for fair, safe services for women and thank them for their leadership,” said **Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, co-chair of the City Council’s Women Caucus.**

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