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## **House Democrats Respond to HB 5 Passing Committee Today**

**TALLAHASSEE** – Following [HB 5](#) passing the Professions & Public Health Subcommittee today along a party-line vote, members of the House Democratic Caucus issued the following statements:

**Leader Evan Jenne (D-Hollywood)** stated, “HB 5 is nothing but an egregious attack on the rights of Floridians. It’s anti-freedom and political interference. We can’t claim ‘free State of Florida’ if we, as a legislative body, are considering legislation that forces victims of incest or rape to carry out an unwanted pregnancy. We need to focus the crises Floridians are facing today, starting with affordable housing.”

**Representative Anna Eskamani (D-Orlando)** said, “Let’s be clear -- this is not a moderate bill and there is no such thing as a “reasonable” abortion ban. Abortion bans impact every person, but those who are most negatively impacted will be the young person of color who can’t leave the state, the homeless person who doesn’t realize they’re pregnant till past 15 weeks, the mom making a personal decision so she can be a better mom for the kids she already has, or the person with disabilities who is much more likely to experience sexual assault compared to her peers, and realizes that as a rape survivor she can’t access an abortion. This bill is not moderate, it is extreme. And we will do everything we can to stop it.”

**Representative Fentrice Driskell (D-Tampa)** added, “This bill is terrible for all Floridians, particularly for those who are low-income, live in rural areas, or are people of color who have historically faced inequitable access to quality healthcare, or low income people who cannot afford to travel out of state for a safe abortion. It is not the government’s place to interfere with one of the toughest decisions a person will ever make. That private decision is one of faith, healthcare, personal freedom, and protecting the emotional and physical future of women and their families. Tallahassee politicians should not be involved.”

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