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## House Democrats React to Extremist Abortion Ban Passing Committee

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Today, the **House Healthcare Regulation Subcommittee** passed [HB 7](#), the most restrictive abortion ban bill ever heard in Florida, despite united Democratic resistance.

This bill will ban abortions after 6 weeks, before many women even know they are pregnant, and long before many important tests for viability and maternal risk can be done. It also prohibits telehealth providers from prescribing certain medications. These restrictions put Tallahassee politicians in between a woman and her doctor when it comes to these important and personal medical decisions.

Every Democrat on the committee voted against this extremist example of government overreach.

House Democratic Caucus **Leader Fentrice Driskell (D- Tampa)** said, “Women in Florida do not need Tallahassee politicians making these incredibly private and personal health care decisions for them, suppressing their stories and silencing their voices. The choice to seek an abortion should be between a woman and her doctor, with support from her friends and family. This ban will trap thousands of women in unwanted or dangerous pregnancies, putting their lives and futures at risk. It is unpopular, extremist, and wrong, and effectively band access to critical health care when a pregnant woman may need it most.”

**Representative Anna V. Eskamani (D- Orlando)** stated, “Despite powerful public testimony in opposition to the bill, Florida Republicans jammed through their dangerous 6-week abortion ban. This ban is unpopular, anti-freedom, and would be devastating to the people of this state. We must continue to fight back in the Legislature, organize in our communities and ensure voters know how their

lawmakers are voting.”

From the committee members:

**Representative Christine Hunschofsky (D- Parkland)** added, “It was heartbreaking to hear the testimony of women from across Florida who came to Tallahassee to demand their government not strip them of their rights and autonomy. A six-week ban is de-facto an all-out ban because many won’t even know they’re pregnant until it’s too late. This extreme and intrusive government interference is the antithesis of freedom.”

**Representative Robin Bartleman (D- Weston)** said, “As someone who was faced with the decision to end a much-wanted pregnancy, I can tell you it is a deeply personal and painful decision; the only people that belonged in my exam room with me were my husband, my doctor and MY God - NOT the Florida Legislature. A 6-week abortion ban is essentially an outright abortion ban. Many women get irregular periods and are unaware that they are even pregnant at 6 weeks. The exception carved out for rape victims is window dressing. Only two in ten women even report a sexual assault. Creating this paperwork hurdle retraumatizes the victim. The idea that my daughters will no longer have the ability to make decisions about their bodies is devastating. We warned everyone last session that the 15-week ban was not the end.”

**Representative Kelly Skidmore (D- Boca Raton)** added, “Abortion is healthcare, it is not a moral failing to be weighed on the scale created by politicians. Access to healthcare saves lives. Doctors and patients need to be trusted to make medical decisions. Abortion bans are not about saving life, they are about keeping control and they hurt women and families. We can’t even pretend that this is not a full ban on abortion.”

**Representative Allison Tant (D- Tallahassee)** said, “As the one Democratic woman representing rural counties in North Florida, it is my responsibility to speak up for the women who do not have adequate access to maternal healthcare. In my rural counties, one has no hospital, and the other only has 3 practicing doctors and none of them offer maternal healthcare. There is no place for people to go. This is why I sponsored an amendment to remove the requirement that two doctors sign off for a woman to receive emergency care to get an abortion when her life is threatened. This amendment was struck down by the majority on the committee. This bill is dangerous especially for those in rural counties who already struggle to get basic healthcare to bring a healthy baby to term.”

**Representative Gallop Franklin (D- Tallahassee)** added, "This is a very important issue that severely limits women's reproductive choices. This bill simply does not protect a woman's right to choose by expanding the circumstances under when an abortion can be performed. A woman's right to make healthcare decisions should not be forced by anyone. Every citizen deserves access to vital and lifesaving healthcare. As legislators, we are responsible for standing against ideological attempts that threaten women's access to abortion health care. I'll continue to protect individuals' freedoms so that health decisions can remain between the

patients and their health providers."

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