

How the reversal of Roe v. Wade could impact the transgender community

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Monday night was like any other for Alexis Rangel.

"I was at home doing my best to relax and, you know, have a nice dinner," she said.

Then the news broke that a majority of Supreme Court justices were poised to [overturn the landmark Roe v. Wade decision on abortion](#), and suddenly Rangel's evening plans changed.

"Abortion rights and reproductive rights in this decision are about trans rights," she said.

Rangel is a policy counselor at the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) where she organizes in legislative offices at the federal and state level to advocate for transgender rights.

"We have to recognize that this decision will impact trans folks," she said. "Particularly trans men and nonbinary folks who need access to reproductive healthcare and abortion specifically."

A sense of urgency brought Rangel near the steps of the Supreme Court for a midnight protest on Monday, and she said she planned to keep up the momentum.

Activists and supporters of the LGBTQ community say any decision to overturn Roe v. Wade could have significant consequences on vulnerable groups if privacy-related rights like access to contraception or gender-affirming care are threatened.

Notion of privacy 'thrown into question'

It is a concern that President Joe Biden has repeatedly raised since the draft opinion was first published by Politico, saying the issue is "a lot bigger than abortion." He named LGBTQ rights and contraception rights as those specifically at risk.

"What are the next things that are going to be attacked? Because this MAGA crowd is really the most extreme political organization that's existed in American history — in recent American history," Biden said on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, he said he believed the reasoning in the draft decision "would mean that every other decision related to the notion of privacy is thrown into question."

The leaked draft refutes this idea.

"To ensure that our decision is not misunderstood or mischaracterized, we emphasize that our decision concerns the constitutional right to abortion and no other right," wrote Justice Samuel Alito. "Nothing in this opinion should be understood to cast doubt on precedent that do not concern abortion."

States where abortion likely would become illegal if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned

Eighteen states have “trigger laws” to ban abortion if *Roe* is overturned or have pre-*Roe* abortion bans still on the books. Additionally, some states have laws — not currently in effect — banning abortion after six to eight weeks.

Affected states: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming

Source: [Guttmacher Institute](#) (as of April 19)

Credit: NPR

Still, rights activists aren't convinced and are now energized to take action across the country.

When states like Texas began stripping access to abortion, Maryland resident Mickey Goldberg decided to change her protesting strategy. She started giving more money to Planned Parenthood.

"And it helps, but it's not enough," she said. So she went a step further.

"I'm now giving to Texas Planned Parenthood, specifically to a fund that enables women to leave the state and get an abortion when they need one," Goldberg said.

She was one of hundreds of people who protested at the Supreme Court this week, where D. Ojeda also rallied.

Ojeda is a senior national organizer for NCTE and said they felt the attacks on other rights were already starting.

"The same tactics that we're seeing on the attacks of abortion care, are the same tactics we're seeing with gender-affirming care, and access to gender-affirming care, the attacks are on our health care providers, and then our vital body autonomy," Ojeda said.

The 'violence' of forced pregnancy

The NCTE is mobilizing at the local, state and federal level, speaking to lawmakers about the impact a reversal could have for the transgender community. They are also calling on the Senate to pass the Equality Act, a bill that would expand protections for the LGBTQ community.

"Mobilization is actually working in solidarity with each other," Ojeda said.

"There's a level of violence that comes from forcing people to be pregnant. There's another layer when you're trans, you know, issues of gender dysphoria."

Cathryn Oakley, senior counsel at the Human Rights Campaign argued the stakes are as high as they are clear.

"The court is opening the door to having things like contraception be put at risk," Oakley said, adding that there were many people having legal recognition of their constitutional rights stripped away.

The Human Rights Campaign is calling for advocacy at the local and national level.

"What we really need now is outrage, anger and action for those among our community who are about to see the most destructive attack on our civil rights in a generation," Oakley said. "And we need to fight back by showing up by being in the streets by protesting for ourselves and the LGBTQ-plus community, and in solidarity with other folks who are having critical civil rights protections stripped away."

On Tuesday, Chief Justice Roberts confirmed the authenticity of the draft opinion published by Politico Monday night. The court is expected to issue its ruling later this summer.