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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. _____

Commending State and local governments for championing reproductive rights
as human rights.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia submitted the following concurrent resolution; which
was referred to the Committee on _____

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commending State and local governments for championing
reproductive rights as human rights.

Whereas, on June 24, 2022, the United States Supreme Court in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, (597 U.S. 215 (2022)) overturned *Roe v. Wade*, (410 U.S. 113 (1973)) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, (505 U.S. 833 (1992)), and eliminated the Federal constitutional right to abortion in the United States;

Whereas, subsequently, more than a dozen States have passed legal barriers that fully ban abortion, and many others have passed legal barriers that severely restrict abortion, making abortion inaccessible in half of all States in the United States;

Whereas the retrogression on abortion rights in the United States is inconsistent with the United States obligations under international human rights law;

Whereas treaties ratified by the United States should be upheld at the Federal, State, and local levels as they are considered the “supreme Law of the Land” under clause 2 of article VI of the United States Constitution;

Whereas the United States has ratified, and is bound by, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, done on June 1, 1992, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, done on September 29, 1994, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done on September 19, 1994;

Whereas the United States has previously joined the international community in identifying reproductive rights as human rights, including during the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women;

Whereas escalating restrictions on abortion access in the United States conflict with public health guidance;

Whereas the abortion care guideline, published by the World Health Organization in 2022, recommends the full decriminalization of abortion, the removal of grounds-based restrictions on abortion, and the removal of gestational age limits on the provision of abortion care;

Whereas access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health care, including abortion, is essential to the health and well-being of all people;

Whereas no one should be criminalized for any pregnancy, circumstances surrounding their pregnancy, or pregnancy outcome;

Whereas punishing pregnant people for their pregnancy outcomes and the circumstances of their pregnancies or for accessing essential reproductive and sexual health care violates their human rights;

Whereas the threat of criminalization or prosecution can intimidate people from seeking or providing care;

Whereas reproductive and sexual health care providers administer high-quality, essential health care, and play a critical role in ensuring people can make decisions about their bodies and lives with dignity;

Whereas no one should be criminalized for providing essential health care;

Whereas pregnant people who have been denied abortion care suffer many adverse consequences, including putting their health, fertility, and lives at risk, being forced to carry pregnancies against their will and even nonviable pregnancies to term, and being criminalized for miscarriage, the circumstances of their pregnancies, abortions, and other pregnancy outcomes;

Whereas pregnant people in Texas and other Southern States have been forced to undergo invasive and dangerous surgeries, such as cesarean sections, instead of receiving routine abortion care when faced with obstetric emergencies, putting their health and lives at risk;

Whereas such legally compelled interventions are obstetric violence, a form of gender-based violence which has long affected communities of color and especially Black communities, as early American gynecology treated Black women as expendable clinical material for its institutional needs, and this medical violence was animated by biologi-

cal racism and the legal and economic exigencies of the antebellum era;

Whereas all levels of government are obligated to prevent rather than empower discrimination and violence at the hands of the state;

Whereas confusion and fear among health care providers on what is allowable under emergency medical exceptions has led to delays and denials of necessary lifesaving care, increasing health risks and preventable maternal deaths;

Whereas research has shown an 8-percent increase in pregnancy-associated mortality, with the highest impact being felt amongst Black women, who already face a higher rate of baseline mortality;

Whereas pregnant people in States that ban abortion, like Texas and Louisiana, are twice as likely to die during pregnancy or childbirth;

Whereas, in Texas, after the State's ban went into effect, hospitals experienced a 50-percent increase in sepsis rates during second-trimester hospitalizations;

Whereas, in 2024, over 155,000 patients were forced to travel out of State to seek abortion care, and between 2020 and the first half of 2023, the number of people traveling out of State for care jumped from 1 in 10 to 1 in 5;

Whereas, because large swaths of the country have restrictive policies, thousands of people have had to travel hundreds of miles to access care;

Whereas millions more cannot and will not be able to travel to access abortion care because of financial and travel-related barriers, their immigration status and risk of deportation, or because they are incarcerated or on probation or parole;

Whereas young persons under 18 face additional and often insurmountable barriers to accessing abortion, such as abortion bans, laws that force them to notify or seek consent of a guardian even when that might pose a threat to their safety, and laws that criminalize adults who help them leave these State for an abortion;

Whereas these barriers force countless young persons under 18 into unwanted pregnancies or unsafe situations, particularly those from abusive or unsupportive families, harms that are compounded for LGBTQIA+ youth, young people of color, and those without financial or travel resources;

Whereas Indigenous people, Black people, people of color, people with low incomes, people living in rural areas, people with disabilities, immigrants, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and other marginalized individuals are disproportionately likely to be surveilled, arrested, charged, prosecuted, convicted, and heavily punished within the United States criminal justice system and, due to systemic discrimination, to experience additional scrutiny from the United States legal system;

Whereas, from 2006 to 2022, almost 1,400 people were arrested in the United States in relation to the circumstances or outcomes of their pregnancy, including pregnancy loss, and prosecutions overwhelmingly targeted people with low incomes, and this trend has only increased since the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision;

Whereas, in the first 2 years since the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, State prosecutors have initiated at least 412 cases charging pregnant people with crimes related to pregnancy, pregnancy loss, or birth, and

more than three-quarters of the people charged were low-income individuals, and in 264 of these cases, information supporting criminal prosecution was obtained or disclosed in a medical setting;

Whereas many pregnant people experiencing miscarriage have been forced to wait until they are septic before receiving treatment or denied treatment altogether, even when the pregnancy is no longer viable;

Whereas life-threatening conditions, such as preterm premature rupture of membranes (PPROM), should permit lawful emergency care under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) and under lawful exceptions within State abortion bans, but in practice these exceptions are not always implemented, thereby threatening people's health and lives;

Whereas a climate of fear has also deterred providers from giving clear information about pregnancy options, and even from providing prenatal care early in pregnancy when the risk of miscarriage can be high, further undermining patients' rights to informed consent and safe, necessary medical care;

Whereas the chilling effect of the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision has resulted in at least 34 clinics closing in States where abortion remains legal since 2024;

Whereas such restrictive policies have forced high-risk pregnancy specialists to flee antiabortion States, including the State of Idaho which saw a decrease in high-risk pregnancy specialists of over 40 percent in the wake of the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision;

Whereas, alongside abortion restrictions, attacks on LGBTQIA+ health care access, including gender-affirming care, have increased, impacting marginalized groups;

Whereas, during this Congress, the Federal Government passed a spending bill which cut \$1 trillion from critical health programs, effectively upending the entire system while making it even harder for an estimated 10 million people who will lose their health insurance coverage, while also defunding Planned Parenthood by removing access to essential Medicaid funds;

Whereas the United States has been reviewed by two United Nations treaty-monitoring bodies since the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Human Rights Committee;

Whereas, on August 11 and 12, 2022, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reviewed the United States implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and, on August 30, 2022, issued recommendations to the United States Government to address the profound disparate impact of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* on women of racial and ethnic minorities, Indigenous women, and those with low incomes;

Whereas, on October 17 and 18, 2023, the United Nations Human Rights Committee reviewed the United States implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, on November 3, 2023, issued concluding observations to the United States Government expressing deep concern over the criminalization of abortion seekers, those who help them, and abortion pro-

viders; restrictions on interstate travel that inhibit access to care; bans on medication abortion; the use of digital data surrounding abortion for prosecution purposes; and the profound impact on the human rights of women and girls seeking an abortion, and in particular, the disproportionate impact on women and girls with low incomes and from vulnerable groups, those living in rural areas, and those belonging to racial and ethnic minorities;

Whereas State and local governments play an important role in ensuring that the United States complies with its treaty obligations;

Whereas the United Nations Human Rights Committee recommended on November 3, 2023, that State and local lawmakers uphold human rights in their lawmaking and to take specific action to ensure that no one is criminalized for a pregnancy outcome, nor anyone who provides abortion care or helps someone obtain an abortion, and that all people can access abortion care when they need it;

Whereas, despite the United States Government supporting 13 recommendations relating to sexual and reproductive health in its prior Universal Period Review cycle in 2021, the United States has facilitated an increasingly hostile legal, policy, and practice landscape around abortion and reproductive health care, to a deeply harmful effect;

Whereas, on August 27, 2025, in an attempt to evade accountability for grave, ongoing human rights violations in the country, the United States Department of State sent a letter to the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights stating that the Trump administration will not participate in its upcoming Universal Periodic

Review (UPR), a United Nations process through which countries review each other's human rights records;

Whereas, on November 7, 2025, following receipt of such letter, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a decision in which it called on the United States to resume its cooperation with the UPR and postponed the UPR to November 2026, while leaving open the possibility for the UPR to be scheduled sooner;

Whereas every United Nations member country participates in the UPR process, and, to date, only two other countries, Israel and Nicaragua, have ever attempted to evade review, and no country has ever fully done so;

Whereas this proposition to boycott the United States UPR presents a dangerous precedent at the United Nations and for global accountability mechanisms more broadly;

Whereas rather than avoiding accountability for the erosion and attacks on human rights, all levels of government should be working to respect, protect, and ensure human rights;

Whereas, on October 21, 2025, the Town Council of Carrboro, North Carolina, unanimously passed a resolution declaring December 10 as "Human Rights Day" and unanimously resolved to advocate for Women's Health and Comprehensive Reproductive Rights as a human right, affirmed that all people deserve access to high-quality health care without fear of government interference or punishment, affirmed that North Carolina has an obligation to implement and protect human rights, and aligns itself with its human rights obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, in accordance with clause 2 of article VI of the United States Constitution;

Whereas, on November 4, 2025, the city of Mount Rainier, Maryland, issued a mayoral proclamation declaring December 10 as “Human Rights Day” and aligning the city government with its human rights obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the city will pass a resolution declaring the same in December 2025;

Whereas, on November 13, 2025, the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, enacted a resolution declaring December 10 as “Human Rights Day” and elevating the Nation’s human rights obligations under the treaties it has ratified, in accordance with clause 2 of article VI of the United States Constitution, as well as recognizing that these human rights obligations require access to the full spectrum of reproductive health care services, including abortion care, and uplifting the numerous human rights violations across the Nation in States that deny this essential care, including the criminalization of pregnancy outcomes, and the exacerbation of severe maternal morbidity and the racial disparities present therein;

Whereas on December 3, 2025, Fulton County, Georgia, considered the adoption of a resolution that affirms that reproductive rights are human rights, condemns the criminalization of abortion and related services, urges the Georgia General Assembly to repeal the State’s six-week abortion ban, and recognizes that treaties ratified by the United States should be upheld at the Federal, State, and local level as they are considered the “supreme Law

of the Land” under clause 2 of article VI of the United States Constitution;

Whereas on December 3, 2025, Fulton County, Georgia, presented a proclamation declaring December 10, 2025, as “Human Rights Day” and affirming that human rights are universal and that every level of government must ensure that these rights are upheld in law, policy, and practice;

Whereas, on December 4, 2025, the city of Austin, Texas issued a mayoral proclamation declaring December 10 as “Human Rights Day” and aligning itself with its human rights obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, in accordance with clause 2 of article VI of the United States Constitution, as well as elevating the egregious human rights violations occurring in Texas each day, including the mass and illegal detention and deportation scheme that suspends the human rights of migrants, the systemic injustices of the criminal legal system, the expansion of the “terrorism” framework and vast surveillance infrastructure used to repress expression, the regression on reproductive rights and bodily autonomy, and the criminalization of homelessness and poverty;

Whereas, on December 4, 2025, the city of Baltimore passed a resolution recognizing December 10 as “Human Rights Day”, reaffirming the City Council’s commitment to aligning its policy with the human rights obligations of international law and calling on all city agencies, organi-

zations, and residents to reaffirm their commitment to the fundamental rights and intrinsic worth of all human beings, and reaffirming its commitment to protecting its citizens' reproductive rights and committing to supporting measures to ensure access to abortion, family planning, labor and delivery care, miscarriage management, pre- and post-natal care, and all other reproductive health services regardless of background;

Whereas, on September 11 and 12, 2024, the city councils of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, North Carolina, introduced and passed resolutions declaring reproductive rights and abortion as human rights, and explicitly condemning the chill felt in North Carolina from neighboring States that ban abortion and the criminalization of anyone for a pregnancy outcome or for any circumstance surrounding their pregnancy;

Whereas, on June 28, 2022, the city of Alexandria, Virginia, enacted a resolution to expand access to abortion in the wake of the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, and the city council held a status update meeting to address areas for improvement on June 25, 2024, just after the 2-year anniversary of the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* ruling;

Whereas Louisiana House bills 56, 63, 164, and 293 were introduced in February 2024 and sought to increase access to reproductive health care, and committee testimony regarding the bills illustrated the human rights concerns and obligations that necessitated the passage of these bills;

Whereas Mount Rainier, Maryland, issued a mayoral proclamation declaring June 24, 2024, as "Reproductive Rights are Human Rights Day", a first-of-its-kind effort on a

local level to protect reproductive freedom as a human right, and passed a resolution declaring the same on October 1, 2024;

Whereas Montgomery County, Maryland, passed a resolution to address the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision in 2022 and passed a resolution with unanimous support on September 10, 2024, to increase access to abortion in the country and to explicitly condemn the criminalization of anyone for a pregnancy outcome or the criminalization of anyone for a circumstance surrounding their pregnancy;

Whereas the city of Baltimore, Maryland, passed a resolution on September 30, 2024, affirming Baltimore's commitment to reproductive rights and support for the Maryland constitutional amendment to ensure access to abortion, family planning, labor and delivery care, miscarriage management, prenatal and postnatal care, and all other reproductive health services regardless of background;

Whereas Governor Wes Moore signed a proclamation enshrining in law the fundamental right to reproductive freedom into the Maryland State constitution on January 17, 2025;

Whereas the City Council of Austin, Texas, has invested over \$400,000 in support of abortion access to help low-income people overcome the myriad barriers they face seeking abortion care, and passed a resolution on August 29, 2024, declaring abortion as a human right, acknowledging the duties of the Texas government at the local and State levels to uphold its human rights obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and explicitly condemning the criminalization of

anyone for a pregnancy outcome or the criminalization of
anyone for a circumstance surrounding their pregnancy;

Whereas the Carrboro, North Carolina, Baltimore, Maryland,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Fulton County, Georgia,
resolutions referred to in this preamble, as well as the
Austin, Texas, and Mount Rainer, Maryland, proclama-
tions declaring December 10 as “Human Rights Day” re-
flect State and local efforts to address recommendations
made by the United Nations Human Rights Committee
on maternal mortality, voluntary termination of preg-
nancy, and sexual and reproductive rights, and to pro-
mote and protect human rights; and

Whereas Louisiana House bills 56, 63, 164, and 293, the city
of Mount Rainier, Maryland, proclamation and resolution
making June 24, 2024, “Reproductive Rights are Human
Rights Day”, and resolutions for Austin, Texas, Mont-
gomery County, Maryland, Alexandria, Virginia, Balti-
more, Maryland, and Chapel Hill and Carrboro, North
Carolina, reflect State and local efforts to address rec-
ommendations made by the United Nations Human
Rights Committee on maternal mortality, voluntary ter-
mination of pregnancy, and sexual and reproductive
rights, and to promote and protect human rights: Now,
therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) recognizes the important role that State and
4 local governments should play to ensure that the
5 United States complies with its treaty obligations;

1 (2) condemns the criminalization of abortion
2 and the criminalization of any circumstances or out-
3 comes of a person’s pregnancy in the United States;

4 (3) affirms that all people deserve access to
5 high-quality health care without fear of punishment;

6 (4) affirms that reproductive rights are human
7 rights;

8 (5) urges the governments of States that im-
9 pose restrictions harmful to pregnant people to re-
10 peal those restrictions; and

11 (6) urges the governments of States—

12 (A) to repeal State laws that criminalize
13 abortion;

14 (B) to prohibit the prosecution of people
15 for having abortions or for any other cir-
16 cumstances or outcomes of their pregnancies;
17 and

18 (C) to protect and guarantee human
19 rights.