

Letter: These bills threaten women's health

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The members of the Health Access and Privacy Alliance, a coalition of statewide civic, educational, religious, professional and health organizations that work to improve access to health care would like to educate the public about several bills being proposed this legislative session. We have identified these bills because they do not support the health and well-being of women, because they do not meet our values of honesty, health, compassion and justice and because they will almost certainly generate lawsuits, the costs of which will be borne by Indiana taxpayers.

- House Bill 1134 (Rep. Curt Nisly, R-Goshen) would essentially ban all abortions, make certain types of birth control illegal, and set off a predictable legal battle over the constitutional right of a woman's privacy — a question that has been settled law for more than 40 years and was upheld just last summer by the U.S. Supreme Court.
- House Bill 1128 (Rep. Ronald Bacon, R-Chandler) forces health providers and midwives to give patients false information, claiming that medication abortions can be reversed or arrested.
- Senate Bill 404 (Rep. Erin Houchin, R-Salem) is a misguided attempt to impose additional restrictions on minors seeking abortions by removing, in some cases, a judge's ability to ensure their privacy. The bill also unnecessarily criminalizes physicians, religious leaders and others who may seek to counsel minors.
- Senate Bill 118 (Rep. Dennis Kruse, R-Auburn) imposes even broader ultrasound requirements on women seeking an abortion than those currently being challenged in court. The proposed law would force a woman to view and listen to an ultrasound in violation of her privacy and free speech rights and fails to take into account rape or incest, and is unsympathetic to women who receive a tragic diagnosis.

The Health Access and Privacy Alliance pledges to work with lawmakers on a variety of alternative initiatives. Indiana lawmakers can lay the groundwork for improved health among all Hoosiers. Let's work together to make improved health a reality for our state.

Reba Boyd Wooden, chair
Health Access and Privacy Alliance
Indianapolis

HAPA coalition members:

All Options Pregnancy Center — Bloomington; American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana; American Association of University Women, Indiana; American Association of University Women, Indianapolis; American Association of University Women, Muncie; Center for Inquiry — Indiana; Congregation Beth El Zedek; Indiana Chapter Americans United for Separation of Church and State; Indiana Religious Coalition for Reproductive Justice; Indiana NOW; Indianapolis NOW; Indy Feminists; Jewish Community Relations Council; League of Women Voters Bloomington/Monroe; League of Women Voters Greater Lafayette; League of Women Voters Indiana; League of Women Voters Muncie/Delaware; National Council of Jewish Women; Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky; SEIU Healthcare Illinois/Indiana/Missouri/Kansas.