



WLP Statement on Governor Wolf's Lawsuit Against the General Assembly

Governor Wolf is suing the General Assembly for advancing SB 106 and the No Right to Abortion amendment in an unconstitutional process

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PENNSYLVANIA - Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf is suing the Pennsylvania General Assembly for what he called "their unconstitutional attempt to ban abortion in Pennsylvania" in [a statement](#) released this afternoon. In the complaint, Governor Wolf alleges

"To be clear, WLP opposes the No Right to Abortion amendment in SB 106 no matter what bill number is attached or what process is used to advance it," **says WLP interim co-director Amal Bass**. "The Pennsylvania constitution has broader protections, and is independent of, the U.S. constitution, including reproductive rights. The only purpose and effect of the No Right to Abortion amendment is to eliminate the reproductive rights we have protected by constitution so that Pennsylvania lawmakers can ban abortion in Pennsylvania."

Given the contemptuous intention and process behind passing [SB 106](#), we wouldn't be surprised to learn, as alleged in today's filing, that lawmakers supporting this cynical legislation violated the Pennsylvania state constitution in their secretive rush to eliminate Pennsylvanians' rights.

Senate Bill 106 originated as a bill to deprive Pennsylvanians of the opportunity to elect a Lieutenant Governor in the Commonwealth. Late at night on July 7, anti-abortion lawmakers convened to rewrite the [No Right to Abortion amendment](#), wrap it into SB 106 along with three additional constitutional amendments, and push it through the Pennsylvania House. Lawmakers in the House Rules Committee had to suspend their own rules on voting in the middle of the night to execute this [midnight raid on our rights](#).

The public needs to understand that the five constitutional amendments stuffed into Senate Bill 6 comprise a small fraction of the [constitutional amendment avalanche](#) coming down on voters, many of which would eliminate rights that Pennsylvanians currently enjoy under our state constitution.

This current barrage of assaults on our state-based rights, and the mass rewriting of our state constitution to do it, is unprecedented. Before the current legislative session, 49 constitutional amendments have been introduced since 1968. In this session, Pennsylvania lawmakers proposed more than 70 amendments.

"Amending any constitution is historically rare and should be done to enumerate or affirm, not eliminate our rights," **says WLP interim co-director Susan J. Frietsche**. "Yet leaders of the Pennsylvania Legislature are weaponizing a document written to protect our rights to eliminate them, one by one. The Pennsylvania constitution should not be used as a graveyard for failed legislative initiatives."

Pennsylvania's anti-abortion lawmakers are following a [well-established playbook](#) of stripping reproductive rights out of state constitutions then subsequently banning abortion, a strategy that's already been executed in [Tennessee](#), [West Virginia](#), and [Alabama](#). On August 2, [Kansans will be forced to vote to retain their reproductive rights](#) due to the same playbook.

Somehow, even as we watch the traumatic experiences of people living in states that banned abortion — [raped children forced to travel](#) for care, [people with disabilities](#) and [neurological conditions](#) denied lifesaving medication, pregnant [women in medical crisis told they must inch closer to death](#) before they can receive treatment—Pennsylvania's anti-abortion lawmakers are still working to bring these horrors to Pennsylvania families. It's up to us to stop them.

After the first midnight raid on our rights, the General Assembly passed SB 106 the following night with no input from medical experts or the public.

Despite being shut out of the process, Women's Law Project, Catholics for Choice, AccessMatters, National Abortion Federation, NARAL, National Health Law Program, National Women's Law Center, Dr. Sheila Ramgopal, American Society for Reproductive Medicine, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, National Institute for Reproductive Health, Maternity Care Coalition, Pennsylvania Religious Coalition for Reproductive Justice, and The Women's Centers submitted letters to the General Assembly outlining opposition to the No Right to Abortion constitutional amendment.