



# U.S. SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL

## WASHINGTON

## Cantwell's Actions to Protect Reproductive Rights in a Post-Roe World

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) has been a leading voice in the fight for reproductive rights and access to abortion services. Since leaked documents indicated the U.S. Supreme Court's intent to overturn the decades-long precedent set by *Roe v. Wade*, Sen. Cantwell has championed legislation to codify access to reproductive care into federal law, protect those who must cross state lines to obtain legal abortion care or who provide such care to out-of-state patients from legal action, and secure individuals' health care data from collection by third parties.

Sen. Cantwell's office has produced two snapshot reports on the status of reproductive health care in the State of Washington since the Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson*. The 12-month snapshot can be found [HERE](#), and the 18-month snapshot can be found [HERE](#). As the snapshots make clear, the *Dobbs* decision has had significant impacts even in states like Washington that have expressly codified the right to abortion into law. Plus, it is clear that some federal and state legislators are not content to stop at overturning *Roe*, and continue to broadly attack access to all forms of reproductive health care. This document provides an overview of Sen. Cantwell's work to protect patients and providers, preserve access to abortion medication, birth control, and IVF, ensure federal agencies protect reproductive health care, and fight for health care data privacy.

### Protecting Patients and Providers

[May 5, 2022](#): Sen. Cantwell and Senate Democrats announce a scheduled vote on the [Women's Health Protection Act](#). The Cantwell co-sponsored legislation would codify access to abortion into federal law. [[VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

[May 10, 2022](#): The U.S. Senate prepares to vote on the Women's Health Protection Act. Sen. Cantwell delivers remarks on the Senate floor in support of the legislation. The vote fails 49 – 51. [[VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

[July 5, 2022](#): Sen. Cantwell meets with health care providers at the University of Washington Medical Center. At a press conference following the meeting, Sen. Cantwell calls on the U.S.

Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney General to clarify current law and lay out potential federal actions to protect patients and providers following *Dobbs*. [[VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

**July 12, 2022:** Sen. Cantwell joins 35 Senate Democrats in introducing the [Freedom to Travel for Health Care Act of 2022](#). The bill prohibits anyone from interfering with a person's ability to access out-of-state reproductive health care. Sen. Cantwell speaks on the Senate floor in support of the legislation. [[VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

**January 24, 2023:** On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision, Sen. Cantwell and Senate Democrats hold a press conference to once again call on Congress to codify reproductive health care rights into federal law. [[PHOTOS](#) | [VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

**March 8, 2023:** Sen. Cantwell joins 48 of her Senate Democratic colleagues to reintroduce the Women's Health Protection Act in the U.S. Senate. Sen. Cantwell was among the original co-sponsors of the bill when it was first introduced in June 2021.

**March 10, 2023:** Sen. Cantwell and Sen. Patty Murray hold a roundtable with Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson, Planned Parenthood, and local abortion providers to discuss the state reproductive health care landscape and federal actions moving forward. [[PHOTOS](#)]

**March 29, 2023:** Sen. Cantwell and 30 of her Senate Democratic colleagues reintroduce the [EACH Act](#). The legislation would remove the Hyde Amendment and require federal health care programs to cover abortion services.

**March 30, 2023:** Sen. Cantwell and 50 of her Senate colleagues reintroduce the [Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights Act](#). The legislation would permanently repeal the Global Gag Rule, which prevents foreign nongovernmental organizations from receiving U.S. aid if they also offer abortion services or provide information about abortion.

**April 26, 2023:** Sen. Cantwell joins 26 of her Senate Democratic colleagues in introducing the [Let Doctors Provide Reproductive Health Care Act](#). The legislation bans anti-choice states from restricting health care providers from performing legal abortions.

**March 28, 2024:** Sen. Cantwell joins 257 members of Congress in filing an [amicus brief](#) urging the Supreme Court to affirm that longstanding federal law requires hospitals to provide emergency health care services, including abortions.

## **Preserving Access to Abortion Medication, Birth Control, and IVF**

**March 8, 2023:** Sen. Cantwell joins 11 Senate Democratic colleagues in sending a letter to Walgreens opposing the company's premature decision to publicly declare its intent to avoid dispersing mifepristone. [[LETTER](#)]

**March 13, 2023:** Sen. Cantwell and 17 Senate Democrats send letters to seven of the nation's largest retail pharmacies – [Walgreens](#), [Albertsons](#), [Costco](#), [Kroger](#), [Walmart](#), [CVS Health](#), and [Rite](#)

[Aid](#) – urging them to provide the most robust possible legal access to the abortion pill mifepristone for patients.

[March 16, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell speaks on the Senate floor warning of the consequences of a Texas court case, *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA*, that could overrule the FDA's 23-year-old approval of medication abortion, even in states like Washington where abortion is expressly protected. [[VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

[April 11, 2023](#): Following the decision of Judge Matthew J. Kacsmaryk in *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA* to suspend the FDA's longstanding approval of mifepristone, Sen. Cantwell joins 239 members of Congress in submitting an [amicus brief](#) to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in the case, urging the court to stay the district court's ruling while litigation continues.

[May 2, 2023](#): After the U.S. Supreme Court issued a stay of the lower court's ruling, Sen. Cantwell joins 252 members of Congress in submitting an [amicus brief](#) to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in the case of *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA*, urging the court to reverse the district court's ruling that suspends the FDA's approval of mifepristone.

[May 18, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 28 of her Senate Democratic colleagues introduce the [Affordability is Access Act](#). The legislation requires private health insurers to cover FDA-approved over-the-counter contraception without a prescription.

[June 14, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 36 of her Senate Democratic colleagues reintroduce the [Right to Contraception Act](#).

[June 22, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 18 of her Senate Democratic colleagues introduce the [Expanding Access to Family Planning Act](#). The legislation provides federal funding for family planning services and clinics.

[July 25, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell cosponsors the [Convenient Contraception Act](#). The legislation would require private health insurers to cover the cost of a full year's supply of contraception at once.

[January 17, 2024](#): In a briefing for Senate Democrats, Sen. Cantwell questions a panel of abortion experts on the state of reproductive rights in America. Her questions focus on how laws criminalizing abortion in anti-choice states place a greater burden on reproductive health care providers in pro-choice states. [[VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

[January 30, 2024](#): Sen. Cantwell and 263 members of Congress submit an [amicus brief](#) to the Supreme Court in *FDA v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine* urging the Court to reverse the Fifth Circuit's ruling that would restrict patient access to mifepristone.

[February 27, 2024](#): Sen. Cantwell co-sponsors the [Access to Family Building Act](#), which protects access to assisted reproductive services like in vitro fertilization (IVF) under federal law. Senate Republicans blocked the bill on February 28.

## Ensuring Federal Agencies Protect Reproductive Health Care

[June 7, 2022](#): Sen. Cantwell joins 24 of her Senate Democratic colleagues in sending a letter to President Joe Biden urging him to issue an Executive Order to protect reproductive health care rights. [[LETTER](#)]

[March 27, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 37 Senate Democrats send a letter to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin underscoring the importance of providing U.S. service members access to protected leave for reproductive health care services and abortion. [[LETTER](#)]

[April 19, 2023](#): Senate Democrats, U.S. veterans, and reproductive rights groups hold a press conference where Sen. Cantwell speaks against the planned vote to strip away reproductive health care through the Department of Veterans Affairs. [[PHOTOS](#) | [VIDEO](#) | [TRANSCRIPT](#)]

[May 16, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 29 of her Senate Democratic colleagues introduce the [Protecting Service Members and Military Families' Access to Health Care Act](#).

[October 23, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 33 Senators send a bipartisan letter to several federal agencies in support of expanding TRICARE coverage to include over-the-counter contraception with no copayments, out-of-pocket costs, or prescription requirement. [[LETTER](#)]

[October 27, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 47 of her Senate Democratic colleagues send a letter to several federal agencies in support of requiring health care plans to fully cover over-the-counter contraception with no copayments, out-of-pocket costs, or prescription requirement. [[LETTER](#)]

## Fighting for Health Care Data Privacy

[June 21, 2022](#): Sen. Cantwell co-sponsors the [My Body, My Data Act](#), which would prevent personal reproductive health care data from being collected or from being used to target or arrest people who seek an abortion.

[September 13, 2022](#): Sen Cantwell joins 29 of her Senate Democratic colleagues in sending a letter to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra asking the department to strengthen privacy protections through HIPAA. [[LETTER](#)]

[May 18, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell and 12 of her Senate Democratic colleagues reintroduce the [My Body, My Data Act](#).

[July 18, 2023](#): Sen. Cantwell joins 46 Democratic Members of Congress in sending a bicameral letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra urging the agency to adopt stronger privacy regulations for Americans' protected health information. Sen. Cantwell notes that Idaho Attorney General Raúl Labrador and 18 other Republican state attorneys general had sent a letter to Secretary Becerra opposing stronger HIPAA protections, which would make it easier for prosecutors in Idaho to investigate abortions performed in Washington state and to attempt to prosecute patients and providers. [[LETTER](#)]

[April 9, 2024](#): Sen. Cantwell unveils draft language for a bipartisan, bicameral privacy bill, The American Privacy Rights Act (APRA). This comprehensive draft legislation sets clear, national data privacy rights and protections for Americans, eliminates the existing patchwork of state comprehensive data privacy laws and establishes robust enforcement mechanisms to hold violators accountable, including a private right of action for individuals.