

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT HOUSE BILL 5343 AND SENATE BILL 0274  
THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE ACT OF 2017**

WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Democratic Party Women’s Caucus seeks to ensure gender equality in our laws, in our Democratic Party, and in our government representation and believes that a strong Democratic Party values and includes the diverse voices of our party;

WHEREAS, Rhode Islanders support keeping abortion safe and legal by a consistent and overwhelming margin of two to one, as evidenced by the January 2017 public opinion survey released by the Pew Research Center; and

WHEREAS, the current President of the United States and the Republican leadership in the U.S. Congress have pledged to appoint Supreme Court justices that would overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and have already acted to erode access to contraception, and expanded the so-called “Mexico City gag rule” which defunded women’s health care organizations working in foreign nations that discuss abortion; and

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Democratic Party Platform states “A MATTER OF CHOICE - Democrats stand behind the right of every woman to choose, consistent with *Roe v. Wade*, regardless of ability to pay, and we support a national law to protect that right. A woman's right to choose is a fundamental liberty”; and

WHEREAS, the national Democratic Party Platform states “Democrats are committed to protecting and advancing reproductive health, rights, and justice. We believe unequivocally, like the majority of Americans, that every woman should have access to quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion—regardless of where she lives, how much money she makes, or how she is insured. We believe that reproductive health is core to women’s, men’s, and young people’s health and wellbeing”; and

WHEREAS, Rhode Island has unconstitutional and unenforceable laws that restrict the right to abortion, including but not limited to R.I.G.L. § 11-3-1, which makes providing abortion services a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison, and R.I.G.L. § 23-4.8, which requires notification of a spouse before performing an abortion; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Reproductive Health Care Act of 2017 would preserve in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations the right to abortion consonant with the framework established by *Roe vs Wade* and subsequent U.S. Supreme Court decisions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Rhode Island Democratic Party Women’s Caucus formally endorses the Reproductive Health Care Act of 2017; calls upon all members of the Rhode Island House of Representatives and the Rhode Island Senate to immediately support and vote in favor of the Reproductive Health Care Act; and calls upon the honorable Gina Raimondo, Governor, to sign this essential legislation into law.

LET IT BE KNOWN that this resolution was passed by the Rhode Island Democratic Party Women's Caucus on the 12th day of June, 2017. A copy of this resolution shall be delivered to Governor Gina Raimondo, Senate President Dominick Ruggiero, Speaker Nicholas Mattiello, Judiciary Chairs Erin Lynch-Prata and Cale Keable, and RI Democratic Party Chair, Representative Joseph McNamara.