

**“WHAT IF ROE FELL?”
NATIONAL PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS**

*CONDUCTED BY LAKE RESEARCH PARTNERS ON BEHALF OF
THE CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS*

1. The majority of Americans believe that *Roe v. Wade* is vulnerable under the current Supreme Court.

*Q: Do you agree or disagree that given the recent shift in the make-up of the Supreme Court, *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision recognizing that a woman has the right to an abortion, is more vulnerable today than it has been. [If agree/disagree, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly agree/disagree?]¹*

Strongly agree	47
Not so strongly agree	16
Not so strongly disagree.....	11
Strongly disagree	12
(Don't know).....	15
Agree	63
Disagree.....	23

2. While they recognize the vulnerability of *Roe v. Wade*, Americans are largely unaware of legislative efforts underway at the state level to further undermine *Roe* and lay the legal foundation for a post-*Roe* world with abortion bans in multiple states.

Q: Thinking about your state, how much do you know about your state's abortion laws- a lot, some, a little or nothing at all?

A lot	10
Some	27
A little	34
Nothing at all.....	25
(Don't know).....	3
A lot /some	37
A little /nothing at all	60

¹ Note split sampled question.

3. The majority of Americans don't know what abortion laws exist in their state. Furthermore, Americans tend to believe their state is supportive of abortion rights and do not believe their state will enact abortion policy, either before or after a *Roe* reversal. As the *What if Roe Fell?* report shows, the volume of abortion restrictions introduced in the last two years alone indicates Americans underestimate the growing threat at the state level.

Q: Is it your sense that your state currently has a law on the books to restrict the right to an abortion if Roe v. Wade is overturned in the future or does it not have such a law?

Yes, state has law	16
No, state does not have this law	26
(Don't know).....	58

Q: Now let me read you some statements and please tell me which one fits best with your state. Is your state...

Supportive of abortion rights	20
Supportive of abortion with some restrictions	22
Supportive of abortion only in extreme cases, such as to save the life of the woman or in cases of rape and incest or fetal deformities.....	20
Opposes all abortions	7
(Don't know)	31
Supportive	42
Opposes.....	27

Q: How likely do you think it is that your state will enact additional restrictions on abortion if Roe v. Wade is overturned – extremely likely, very likely, somewhat likely, a little likely, or not likely at all? SPLIT SAMPLE A (1/2 sample)

Extremely likely.....	10
Very likely	16
Somewhat likely.....	27
A little likely	9
Not likely at all.....	18
(Don't know).....	22
Likely.....	25
Less likely.....	53

Q: How likely do you think it is that your state will enact a law to ban abortions if Roe v. Wade is overturned— extremely likely, very likely, somewhat likely, a little likely, or not likely at all? SPLIT SAMPLE B (1/2 sample)

Extremely likely.....	6
Very likely	14
Somewhat likely.....	25
A little likely	11
Not likely at all.....	21
(Don't know).....	23
Likely.....	19
Less likely.....	57

Q: How likely do you think it is that your state will enact a law to protect access to abortions before Roe v. Wade is possibly overturned – extremely likely, very likely, somewhat likely, a little likely, or not likely at all?

Extremely likely.....	7
Very likely	11
Somewhat likely.....	26
A little likely	12
Not likely at all.....	20
(Don't know).....	24
Likely.....	18
Less likely.....	58

4. Americans are more likely to oppose a Supreme Court decision to send the right to an abortion to the states to decide, than to support it.

Q: Do you favor or oppose the Supreme Court sending the right to an abortion to the states to decide or are you unsure? [If favor/oppose, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly favor/oppose.]

Strongly favor	17
Not so strongly favor	9
Not so strongly oppose.....	9
Strongly oppose	33
(Don't know).....	33
Favor	25
Oppose.....	42

5. **Seven in 10 Americans agree that government should not interfere with medically necessary procedures prescribed by health care professionals, including abortions. In sharp contrast with this sentiment – and in a decision a near majority of voters oppose – the Supreme Court this year upheld a ban that makes it illegal for a healthcare professional to use an abortion procedure that sometimes is necessary to protect a woman’s health.**

Q: Government should not interfere with medically necessary procedures prescribed by health care professionals, including abortions.²

Strongly agree	56
Not so strongly agree	16
Not so strongly disagree.....	7
Strongly disagree	15
(Don’t know).....	5
Agree	72
Disagree.....	23

Q: Having heard this [see description in footnote 3], do you agree or disagree with the Court’s decision to uphold this Act? [If agree/disagree, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly?]³

Strongly agree	29
Not so strongly agree	12
Not so strongly disagree.....	12
Strongly disagree	36
(Don’t know).....	11
Agree	41
Disagree.....	48

² Note split sampled question.

³ Now let me read you a description about a recent decision that was made by the Supreme Court of the United States.

In 2003, Congress passed the federal Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003 that President Bush signed into law. This bill outlawed some medical procedures that doctors use to provide abortions during the second trimester, which begins at about 12 or 13 weeks, and later in a pregnancy. The law did not provide an exception for when a woman’s health is in danger. The law did provide an exception to save a woman’s life.

This law was challenged in the Supreme Court and on April 18, 2007, the Court issued a decision in this case. In a closely divided 5-4 ruling, the Court upheld the federal Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003. The ban makes it a criminal offense to provide certain abortions as early as 12 to 13 weeks, includes no exception to protect a woman’s health, and carries a two-year criminal penalty for doctors who violate the law.

6. **In fact, majorities of Americans – even some who would not be considered pro-choice – want to protect abortion rights, and they favor a federal law to do just that.**

*Q: Would you favor or oppose federal legislation to protect abortion rights/ before Roe is possibly overturned? [If favor/oppose, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly favor/oppose?]*⁴

Strongly favor	40
Not so strongly favor.....	14
Not so strongly oppose.....	8
Strongly oppose	26
(Don't know).....	11
Favor	55
Oppose.....	34

7. **In addition to federal protections, majorities are in favor of their state making changes in the law to further protect a woman's right to an abortion. Americans are opposed to state-by-state restrictions that could result in abortion policies that vary by state.**

*Q: Would you favor or oppose your state making changes in the law to protect a woman's right to an abortion in your state/before Roe is possibly overturned? [If favor/oppose, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly favor/oppose?]*⁵

Strongly favor	39
Not so strongly favor.....	13
Not so strongly oppose.....	8
Strongly oppose	24
(Don't know).....	15
Favor	52
Oppose.....	33

⁴ (1/2 sample heard) Would you favor or oppose federal legislation to protect abortion rights? [If favor/oppose, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly favor/oppose?]

(1/2 sample heard) Would you favor or oppose federal legislation to protect abortion rights before Roe is possibly overturned? [If favor/oppose, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly favor/oppose?]

⁵(1/2 sample heard) Would you favor or oppose your state making changes in the law to protect a woman's right to an abortion in your state? [If favor/oppose, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly favor/oppose?]

(1/2 sample heard) Would you favor or oppose your state making changes in the law to protect a woman's right to an abortion in your state before Roe is possibly overturned? [If favor/oppose, Ask: Is that strongly/not so strongly favor/oppose?]

Q: Do you think the laws regarding abortion should be national and cover all states or should it be left up to each state to decide if abortion is legal or not within that state?

National law.....	56
Each state decides.....	34
(Don't know).....	10

Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey, which was conducted by phone using professional interviewers. The survey reached 1,000 registered voters ages 18 or older. The survey was conducted between October 22 and October 27, 2007. Telephone numbers for the survey were drawn from a random digit dial sample (RDD). The margin of error is +/-2.7.

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