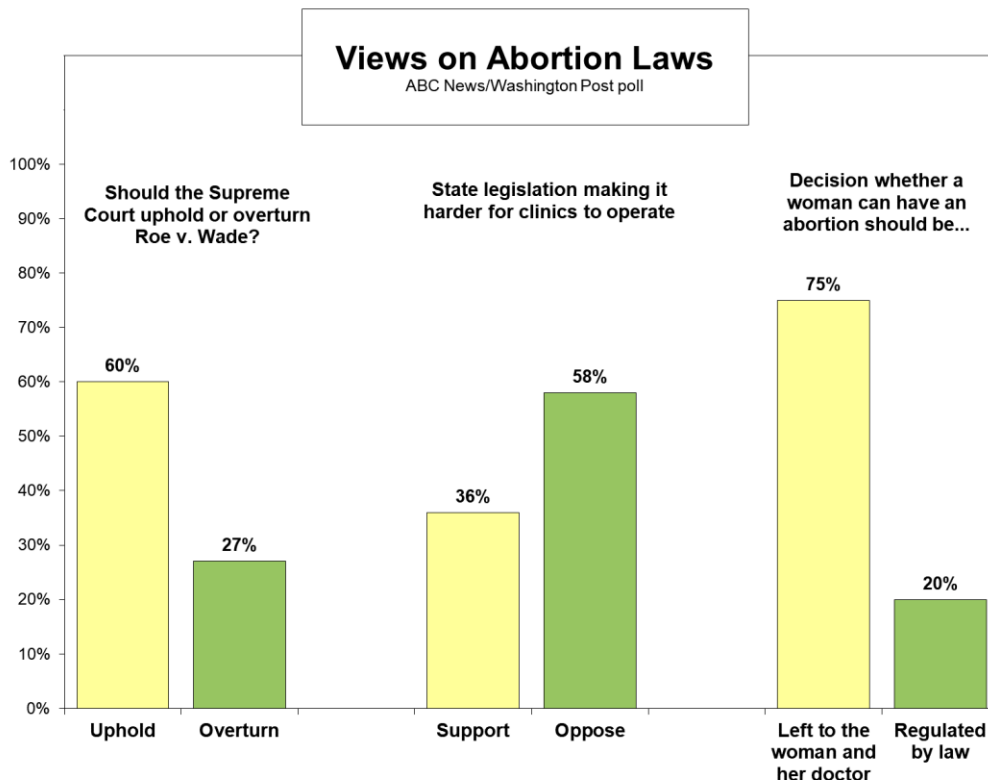


Majorities Back Maintaining Roe v. Wade, Oppose States' Abortion Clinic Restrictions

As abortion returns to the U.S. Supreme Court's docket, majorities of Americans support maintaining Roe v. Wade, oppose states making it harder for abortion clinics to operate and see abortion primarily as a decision to be made by a woman and her doctor, not lawmakers.



Americans by 60-27 percent in this ABC News/Washington Post poll say the high court should uphold Roe, including majorities of men and women, young adults and seniors, college graduates and those without degrees, and whites and racial and ethnic minorities alike. It's 62 percent among Catholics and steady across urban, suburban and rural residents.

A majority supports retaining Roe, the landmark 1973 ruling that established a woman's right to an abortion, even in the 26 states where, according to the [Guttmacher Institute](#), abortion bans or severe restrictions are anticipated if the holding were overturned.

Roe v. Wade aside, the survey finds that 58 percent of Americans oppose state laws that make it harder for abortion clinics to operate, vs. 36 percent who support them. Strong opposition far outstrips strong support, 45 percent vs. 26 percent.

The Texas law that empowers private citizens to sue those providing or assisting with abortions is even more unpopular: Two-thirds of Americans say the Supreme Court should reject it, including nearly a third of those who otherwise support additional state restrictions.

On a more personal level, 75 percent say the decision whether or not a woman can have an abortion should be left to her and her doctor, not regulated by law. It's a sentiment held by majorities across the political spectrum, including by bare majorities of Republicans and conservatives and half of evangelical white Protestants.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR ROE – While *Roe v. Wade* has faced challenges before, analysts suggest that it faces the strongest possibility in recent years of being overturned, via the court's hearing this term of a case challenging abortion restrictions in a Mississippi law.

While prospects for *Roe* in the high court have waxed and waned, public support for the ruling has been largely steady. Sixty percent support for upholding it in this poll, produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#), is consistent with 62 percent among registered voters last fall and 59 to 65 percent in results to a separate question asked from 2005 to 2010.

Support for retaining *Roe* runs especially high among liberals (87 percent), Democrats (82 percent), people with post-graduate degrees (73 percent), those under 30 and Black Americans (both 71 percent). It's also 71 percent among women under 40 – compared with 54 percent among men that age. (Among all women, 64 percent support *Roe*; among all men, 56 percent.)

Opposition is more muted, reaching majorities in only a few groups, and mostly by smaller margins than in groups that back the ruling. Preference for *Roe* to be overturned peaks at 70 percent among people identifying themselves as strong conservatives, but drops to 38 percent among those who are somewhat conservative. It's supported, by contrast, by nearly all strong liberals and 79 percent of those who are somewhat liberal.

In another leading opposition group, 58 percent of evangelical white Protestants support overturning *Roe*, while 30 percent favor upholding it.

In the 26 states where bans or severe restrictions on abortion are considered likely if *Roe* were overturned, 54 percent support upholding it.

STATE LAWS – Like other abortion-related legal issues, views on state restrictions making it harder for abortion clinics to operate are highly partisan. Eighty-three percent of Democrats oppose these laws, with 71 percent strongly opposed, while Republicans support them by nearly 2-1, 62-32 percent. Independents fall closer to Democrats, with 61 percent opposed to such restrictions.

Even less popular than state restrictions in general is the Texas law, with the public saying by 65-29 percent that it should be rejected by the Supreme Court. This law gets majority backing only from evangelical white Protestants (60 percent), conservatives (56 percent) and Republicans (55

percent). Just 7 percent of liberals, 8 percent of Democrats, 16 percent of moderates and 26 percent of independents agree.

The Texas law was the subject of an expedited hearing in the Supreme Court earlier this month, with a ruling expected soon to determine whether the state can be sued by those challenging the statute. The court hears the Mississippi case Dec. 1.

WOMAN/DOCTOR – The most lopsided result in this survey comes in response to a question that poses the issue outside the legal context, asking if the decision whether or not a woman can have an abortion should be left to the woman and her doctor – preferred by 75 percent – or regulated by law, selected by 20 percent.

Among groups, 81 percent of women say the decision should be left to the woman and her doctor, compared with 69 percent of men. That reaches 86 percent among women under 40, as well as a similar 78 percent of older women. It’s higher still among Black people, 91 percent, compared with about seven in 10 whites and Hispanics alike.

Decision whether a woman can have an abortion should be...		
	Between woman and her doctor	Regulated by law
All	75%	20%
Women	81	16
Men	69	24
Women <40	86	12
Black people	91	6
White people	72	22
Hispanic people	70	26
Democrats	95	5
Independents	81	14
Republicans	53	40
Evangelical white Protestants	49	47

Support for leaving the decision to the woman and her doctor ranges from 70 to 80 percent across age groups, encompasses three-quarters of Americans regardless of their education and income levels and crosses other customary attitudinal lines as well; for example, it’s 71 to 76 percent in rural, suburban and urban areas alike.

As noted, even narrow majorities of Republicans (53 percent) and conservatives (52 percent) say the decision should be between a woman and her doctor, and evangelical white Protestants divide on the question, 49-47 percent.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone Nov. 7-10, 2021, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 percentage points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions in the full sample are 27-26-37 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling and data collection by Abt Associates of Rockville, Md. See details on the survey’s methodology [here](#).

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ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com. Join our [mailing list](#) to get updates on all new poll releases.

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Full results follow.

1-10, 15-24 previously released. *= less than 0.5 percent

11. As you may know, abortion law in the United States is based on the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court ruling known as Roe v. Wade. Do you think the Supreme Court should (uphold) Roe v. Wade or (overturn) it?

	Uphold	Overturn	No opinion
11/10/21	60	27	12
10/9/20 RV	62	24	14

Compare to:

The Supreme Court legalized abortion 37 years ago in the ruling known as Roe versus Wade. If that case came before the court again, would you want the next justice to vote to (uphold) Roe versus Wade, or vote to (overturn) it?

	Uphold	Overturn	No opinion
Next justice, 4/25/10	59	38	3
Sotomayor, 6/21/09	60	34	6
Alito, 12/18/05	61	35	4
Alito, 11/2/05	64	31	5
Roberts, 8/28/05	60	33	7
Roberts, 7/21/05	65	32	4

12. Several states are considering or recently have passed legislation that makes it more difficult for abortion clinics to operate there. Overall is this something you support or oppose? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
11/10/21	36	26	11	58	13	45	6
7/21/13	40	25	15	54	17	37	6

13. A state law in Texas authorizes private citizens anywhere in the country to sue anyone who performs or assists in an abortion in Texas after about six weeks of pregnancy. Do you think the U.S. Supreme Court should (uphold) or (reject) this law?

	Uphold	Reject	No opinion
11/10/21	29	65	6

14. Overall, do you think the decision whether or not a woman can have an abortion should be (regulated by law) or should be (left to the woman and her doctor)?

	Regulated by law	Left to the woman and her doctor	No opinion
11/10/21	20	75	5

*** END ***