

EDWARDS

Virginia Senate

June 24, 2022

Senator John S. Edwards (D - Roanoke) made the following statement in response to the United States Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization:

I have long supported a woman's right to make decisions about her own reproductive health. These decisions should be made between her and her doctor. Rigid anti-abortion laws adopted by some states put the lives and health of women at risk. It also devalues the self worth and dignity of a woman's right to decide important events in her life.

In America, we value the liberty rights of each individual, as set forth in the Constitution, including the most personal decisions in each person's life.

The decision just announced in the Dobbs case eviscerates the Supreme Court's long held fidelity to the judicial principles of Stare Decisis. This well established principle is vital to the stability and respect necessary for our legal system to work. By discarding 50 years of reliance on Roe v. Wade's constitutional right of a woman to choose regarding abortion, the Court has put at risk other protections Americans have come to rely on. The justices' several opinions in the case also raise doubts that other constitutional rights are at risk, including marriage equality and access to contraception, relied on by many millions of Americans.

Turning these decisions over to the various States is also an affront to our Constitutional union of states formed by our federal system. We are the United States of America, not a confederation of several independent states each with differing views on the freedoms accorded each individual American. Women in Virginia are still protected by Virginia law which remains a safe haven for women needing such services. Sadly, women across the country have lost their fundamental right to bodily autonomy.

As long as Democrats remain in the majority of the Virginia Senate, we will continue to protect women's rights. The American people need to make their voices heard at the ballot box in November and return a Democratic majority to the United States Senate and the House of Representatives to correct this historic mistake.

For more information, contact our office by telephone at 540-985-8690, or email district21@senate.virginia.gov.

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