



Association of Prosecuting Attorneys Announces Convening of Advisory Committee for Addressing Disparities in Reproductive Health

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The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) this week launched the first meeting of an advisory committee composed of prosecutors from across the country to provide leadership and guidance for its new and compelling project, Addressing Disparities to Reproductive Health. Funded by the Collaborative for Gender + Reproductive Equity (CGRE), the aim of the project is to decriminalize abortion, particularly for those individuals impacted by restrictive laws and policies that prevent them from accessing essential reproductive healthcare.

The APA advisory committee met on October 25-26th in Washington DC to begin developing an equitable and medically informed national policy for prosecutors to address the disparities resulting from unjust and harmful restrictive abortion laws. A medical expert presented important reproductive health information and research data to the committee and engaged in an active dialogue with them. The advisory committee will continue its work in the area of policy development during the coming months. Future goals include developing training curricula and providing direction for training and other resources that will assist prosecutors. These resources will focus on decriminalizing abortion and strengthens prosecutors' knowledge of science-based reproductive healthcare methods and outcomes.

Margaret Hempel, Executive Director of CGRE, said, "CGRE was created to build connections between reproductive, racial, and gender equity movements and leaders in other sectors who share a commitment to civil rights and fairness. We are so pleased to support APA's efforts to engage prosecuting attorneys in the effort to protect healthcare access for all people. We are particularly encouraged that we have so many allies who recognize the need to decriminalize reproductive healthcare, an especially urgent issue amid a rising wave of legal restrictions designed to criminalize people seeking this care and the providers who offer it."

According to [Elizabeth Nash of the Guttmacher Institute](#), 106 abortion restrictions have become law since the beginning of the year, making legislative action targeting critical services for individuals already struggling to obtain healthcare more important than ever. Findings from the report, [Characteristics of U.S. Abortion Patients in 2014 and Changes Since 2008](#) released by the Guttmacher Institute, indicate that 75% are low income, 28% are black, 25% are Hispanic, and 6% are Asian or Pacific Islander. Amid these urgent threats to reproductive healthcare and disparities in access based on race and income, the Supreme Court will also hear oral arguments on December 1st in *Dobbs v. Jackson*



Women's Health Organization, a case in which Mississippi is asking the court to *overturn Roe v. Wade*, which could lead to further restrictions and criminalization of abortion.

David LaBahn, President and CEO of APA, stressed the necessity for prosecutors to address this critical healthcare issue: "The number of restrictive abortion laws and policies in place today is both intentional and staggering. Specifically, individuals of color, low-income people, LGBTQ people, and others are denied the ability to control their reproductive health and lives. Our advisory committee comprises thoughtful and proactive prosecutors who met this week to begin the important work of framing approaches for prosecutors to decriminalize abortion."

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The Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA) is a national non-profit whose mission is to support and enhance the effectiveness of prosecutors in their efforts to create safer communities. APA is made up of elected and appointed prosecuting attorneys from throughout the nation and provides valuable resources such as training and technical assistance to prosecutors to develop proactive and innovative prosecutorial practices that prevent crime, ensure equal justice, and help make our communities safer. APA is committed to the pursuit of justice in whatever form best serves the community. This might include legal proceedings against those who would hurt a child or helping an individual complete a diversion program. We focus on preventing recidivism and providing rehabilitation and successful re-entry. Through multi-disciplinary forums we create an optimal environment to foster justice and affect change in the community.