



FREEDOM IS FOR
EVERYBODY

September 25, 2020

To: Interested Parties

From: NARAL Pro-Choice America

Re: Avoid the traps set by the Right when covering religion and abortion, keep front and center the reality that a majority of people of faith support reproductive freedom

Following the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, President Donald Trump immediately pushed to ram through his third Supreme Court nominee to lock in a Trump supermajority on the court and try to rig his own election. The speculation around who Trump will nominate set off a storm of coverage that referenced the religious identities of the two most-discussed short list contenders, as both are Catholic women opposed to the right to abortion.

It's imperative to remember: Any judicial nominee must be scrutinized on their records, their public statements, and their policy views, especially for a lifetime appointment. This is not about religious identity. People of all faiths support reproductive freedom.

The widespread opposition to filling this vacancy is because it is just weeks before Election Day and people are already voting. This is about democracy, not Catholicism or any other faith. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Trump are engaged in a flagrant power grab, planning to flout the will of the people and install a justice who will decimate our fundamental rights, despite the fact that voters are already casting their ballots for the next president. Voters from across the religious spectrum are outraged by this assault on our democracy and our most deeply cherished values and know that reproductive freedom is on the line.

Questioning a judicial nominee's record on abortion rights and their legal philosophy is a duty of all senators. It is not the same as questioning, or attacking, their religious identity and should not be conflated. Senators should understand when deciding which nominees to confirm what their views are and the impact these views will have on our democracy and our fundamental rights and freedoms.

What's more, reproductive freedom is widely supported by people of all faiths. A majority of voters in battleground states support reproductive freedom and access to abortion, including 73% of Protestants, 70% of Roman Catholics, 83% of voters who practice another form of Christianity, 89% of Jewish voters, 60% of Muslims, and 87% who practice another religion.

In a 2016 poll, Catholics for Choice found that **more than six in 10 (63%) Catholic likely voters** strongly or somewhat agree that “it should be legal for a woman to have an abortion in the United States.” Latinx Catholic likely voters are more likely than white voters to want to keep abortion legal. Sixty-seven percent of Latinx voters support legal abortion.

Everyone ought to have the freedom to make their own decisions about their families and their futures and be treated with empathy, compassion, and kindness. These values are the tenets of every religion. Too often faith is assumed or characterized as oppositional to support for reproductive freedom, when in reality it can be an integral part of it.

“As Catholics, we are called by our faith to follow our conscience in all matters of moral decision-making and to respect another’s right to do the same. When a person exercises their moral agency to seek abortion services, they should be met with affordable, accessible and compassionate care.” - [Sara Hutchinson Ratcliffe, acting president of Catholics for Choice](#)

Soft-partisan suburban women are critical voters needed to win the White House, flip the Senate, and hold the House of Representatives. Many of these voters **identify as people of faith and are deeply concerned about the Republican Party’s attacks on abortion rights.**

Do not be misled by anecdotal reporting and hand-wringing punditry that suggests so-called “single-issue” voters will tip this election to Trump. In fact, in recent [polling](#), just 13% say they would only consider voting for a candidate who supports banning abortion in the November election and a Washington Post/ABC [poll](#) found that only 22% of Republican voters align with their party’s stance to fully ban abortion.