



FREEDOM IS FOR  
**EVERYBODY**

**May 18, 2021**

**To: Interested Parties**

**From: NARAL Pro-Choice America**

**Re: Arizona was a battleground for reproductive freedom in 2021, but advocates are fighting back**

Since state legislatures began their 2021 sessions, we have seen anti-choice lawmakers across the country doubling down on their attacks on reproductive freedom and abortion access. So far this year, anti-choice lawmakers have already introduced, moved, or passed more than 300 bills attacking access to abortion care.

But despite the fact that **Republicans in Arizona kicked off the 2021 session by introducing over a dozen bills attacking reproductive freedom**, advocates for reproductive health, rights, and justice—including NARAL members—have spent the last few months working tirelessly to defeat as many of these extreme and dangerous bills as possible.

### **Slate of Anti-Choice Bills Introduced—and Defeated— in 2021**

Anti-choice lawmakers in the Arizona legislature made it clear that their strategy was to attack abortion rights and access from every angle imaginable—from threatening people who seek abortion care with jail time, to banning abortion before many people even know they're pregnant, to banning public institutions from providing abortion referrals, to putting ideological language defining when life begins into law.

**But thanks to the tireless efforts of Arizonans committed to reproductive freedom, of the dozen anti-choice bills introduced this session, only one bill banning abortion rights (SB 1457) ended up making it to Gov. Ducey's desk. Some of the bills defeated this session include:**

- **[HB 2650](#)** was an extreme and dangerous bill that threatened people who have an abortion or physicians who provide abortion care with a first-degree murder charge, punishable by the death penalty.
- A striker amendment to **[HB 2140](#)** would have banned abortion as early as six weeks—before many people know they're pregnant. In addition to criminalizing abortion providers, the bill would have granted the right to sue to a person who claims paternity of a fetus, creating incentives to sue doctors who provide abortion care.
  - The premise of this amendment was based on medically inaccurate disinformation and misleading claims about fetal development early in

pregnancy— part of the broader playbook by the anti-choice movement to elevate inflammatory rhetoric around abortion care.

- [SB 1251](#) and [HB 2404](#) would have allocated \$1.5 million in taxpayer dollars to funding fake health centers (also referred to as “crisis pregnancy centers” or CPCs). These centers deliberately lie to, shame, and mislead people in order to block them from accessing abortion care.
- [SB 1383](#) would have also banned abortion before many people even know they’re pregnant, while [SB 1641](#) would have banned the standard method for abortion care after about 14-15 weeks of pregnancy by threatening doctors with a felony, punishable by prison.

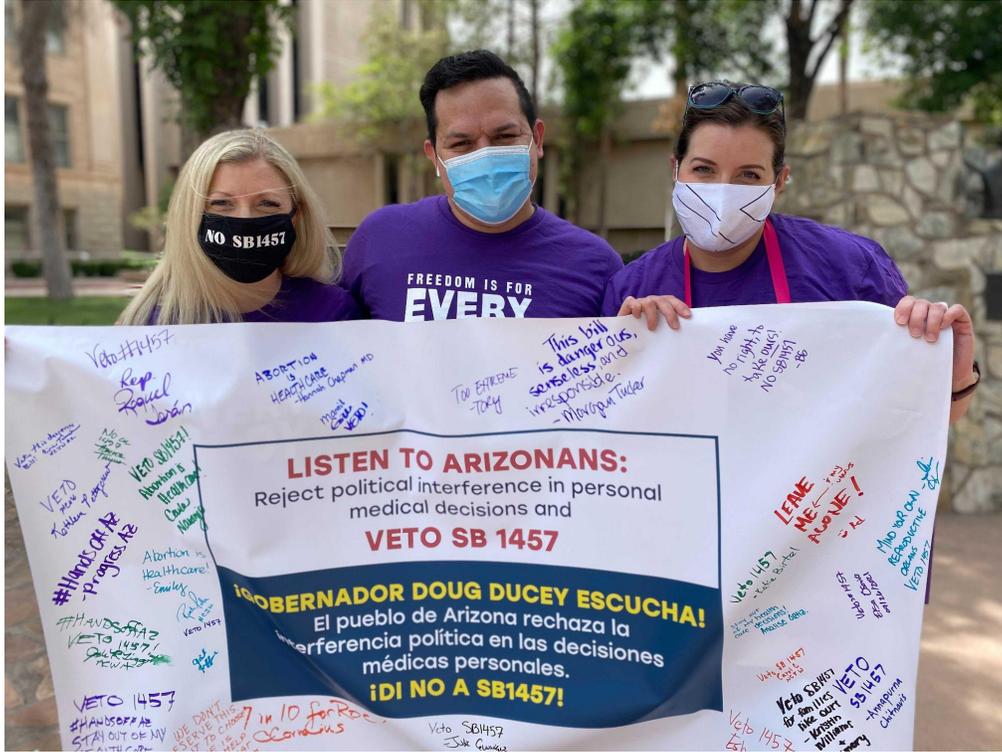
### **Arizonans Fighting Back**

When faced with an onslaught of extreme anti-choice legislation, **Arizonans swiftly mobilized to fight back against unconstitutional attacks on their fundamental freedoms**. A coalition of reproductive health, rights, and justice advocates—including NARAL Pro-Choice America—worked tirelessly to make it clear to Republican state legislators and Gov. Ducey just how out of touch these anti-choice bills are with the vast [majority](#) of Arizonans who support the legal right to abortion.

During the 2021 legislative session, **NARAL members called, emailed, and texted more than 31,000 Arizonans** urging them to reach out to Gov. Ducey and Republican lawmakers to demand they oppose any bills attacking reproductive freedom.

After SB 1457 was pushed through the state legislature in the eleventh hour, dozens of advocates assembled outside the Capitol to deliver a petition and banner calling on Gov. Ducey to listen to Arizonans and reject political interference in personal medical decisions by vetoing SB 1457.

Nearly **3,000 concerned Arizonans signed on to a [petition](#)** calling on Ducey to veto SB 1457, building on the **nearly 13,000 emails and phone calls** made by Arizona residents to Gov. Ducey and Republican state legislators in opposition to the extreme and dangerous bill.



## **Ongoing Battles**

Despite the efforts of activists on the ground, one bill that did make it to Ducey's desk was SB 1457. The sweeping bill threatens doctors who provide abortion care with jail time; locks into law ideological language defining when “life” begins that could lead to criminalizing people who seek abortion care; bans abortion based on the perceived reason a person is seeking care; and bans public education institutions from providing abortion care, among other restrictions.

**Now that Governor Ducey has officially signed this blatantly unconstitutional bill into law, NARAL will be supporting partners' litigation efforts while also laying the groundwork for the 2022 elections.**

Together with its more than 52,000 members across Arizona, NARAL will be ramping up electoral advocacy efforts to **ensure that the [lawmakers who supported SB 1457](#) are held accountable at the ballot box for betraying Arizona values** by supporting political interference in people's personal decisions about if, when, and how to raise a family.



## **GOP Increasingly Out of Touch With Arizonan Values**

Republican politicians' decision to make attacking reproductive freedom their top priority in the 2021 legislative session reflects an increasingly extreme Republican Party that couldn't be more out of touch with the values of their constituents.

A [2020 Public Policy Polling survey](#) finds that a **strong majority (76%) of Arizona voters believe that abortion should be legal**, and that the government should not prevent a woman\* from making that decision for herself. Arizonans agree, these decisions are deeply personal and should not be decided by politicians.

And with *Roe v. Wade* in danger of being overturned in the Supreme Court, **57% agree that it is important for state legislatures to proactively protect the right to abortion through state legislation**. Only 32% disagree. This is also especially important among Hispanic and Latinx voters, with 71% in agreement.

*(\*This language reflects the official language used in the survey instrument and/or report.)*