

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 14, 2018**

**Iowa Supreme Court hears oral arguments  
On appeal of one of the most severe abortion restrictions in U.S.**

(Des Moines, IA) – Today the Iowa Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a case challenging abortion restrictions passed last session. If the Court rules in favor of Planned Parenthood and the ACLU of Iowa, the state will be barred from enforcing two portions of those restrictions.

Last May, Iowa passed one of the most restrictive abortion laws in the country. Planned Parenthood and the ACLU immediately obtained an injunction against two parts of the law that otherwise would 1) require women to make a second, medically unnecessary clinic appointment and then 2) allow at least 72 hours to elapse after that appointment to finally receive abortion services.

“This punitive law is not based on science or current medical practice, which is why major medical societies reject laws like this that are designed solely to restrict access to safe, legal abortion. Based on ideology, this law risks patient health rather than improves it, and it burdens vulnerable Iowans who already face significant barriers to care,” **said PPHeartland Medical Director Jill Meadows, M.D., a plaintiff in the case.** “It’s time for lawmakers, including Gov. Kim Reynolds, to stop practicing medicine and instead focus on making laws that actually improve the lives, health and future of the people they serve.”

If allowed to take effect, these elements of the abortion law would add yet more burdens to Iowa women in accessing abortion services. Many already must drive long distances and take time off work and find child care to get medical care. Requiring women to make an extra, medically unnecessary trip to their provider and to wait before having an abortion would be especially devastating to women who already face significant barriers to care, including low-income and rural women, as well as women at risk for domestic violence and women experiencing pregnancy-related complications.

“Everyone deserves access to care and the opportunity to control their own reproductive health. Today we asked the Court to protect the rights that have long been recognized as fundamental under the Iowa Constitution. We are seeking to ensure Iowans have access to safe, legal and constitutionally protected health care,” **said Rita Bettis, ACLU of Iowa legal director.**

In May 2017, ACLU of Iowa, Planned Parenthood and Planned Parenthood of the Heartland Medical Director Jill Meadows, MD, filed suit to stop enforcement of the two elements of the law that would require women seeking an abortion to make a second, medically unnecessary trip to their health care provider and then wait 72 hours after that visit to actually receive abortion services.

On October 2, 2017, the Polk County District Court declined to block the law. So Planned Parenthood and ACLU then immediately filed an appeal to the Iowa Supreme Court and asked

for a temporary injunction to stay the enforcement of the law through the duration of the lawsuit. The Iowa Supreme Court granted the motion on October 23, 2017.

Attorneys for Planned Parenthood and the ACLU will be available for comment immediately after oral arguments at a press conference on the fourth floor of the Insurance Exchange Building, 505 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. downtown.

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Planned Parenthood of the Heartland is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that provides, promotes, and protects reproductive and sexual health through health services, education, and advocacy. An affiliate of America's most trusted provider of reproductive health care, PPHeartland is proud to offer a full range of high-quality services at 10 health centers in Iowa and Nebraska.

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The ACLU of Iowa is a private, non-partisan organization that fights to advance civil liberties for all. It is the state affiliate of the national American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU prides itself in upholding everyone's civil liberties, no matter who they are or what they believe. We work to assure the rights of all Iowans—from atheists to devout Christians, from labor unions to businesspeople and more—to make sure the constitutional rights of all are preserved. For more information, please go to [www.aclu-ia.org](http://www.aclu-ia.org).

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Planned Parenthood is the nation's leading provider and advocate of high-quality, affordable health care for women, men, and young people, as well as the nation's largest provider of sex education. With approximately 700 health centers across the country, Planned Parenthood organizations serve all patients with care and compassion, with respect and without judgment. Through health centers, programs in schools and communities, and online resources, Planned Parenthood is a trusted source of reliable health information that allows people to make informed health decisions. We do all this because we care passionately about helping people lead healthier lives.