


Agenda Report Reviewed by:  
City Manager: 

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting Date: June 7, 2022  
To: Honorable Mayor and Honorable City Councilmembers  
From: Vice Mayor Hinton and Councilmember Rich  
City Administration  
Subject: Woman’s Right to Choose  
Recommendation: Approve Resolution Supporting a Woman’s Right to Choose  
Funding: Currently Budgeted: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  N/A  
Net General Fund Cost:  
Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Account Code/Costs authorized in City Approved Budget (if applicable) AK (verified by Administrative Services Department)

PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION:

This item requests that the City Council Adopt the Resolution Supporting a Woman’s Right to Choose.

BACKGROUND:

Roe v. Wade (Roe) is the 1973 Supreme Court of the United States decision which guaranteed federal constitutional protections a women’s right to choose in the United States.

Since 1973, working-class women and LGBTQ people have continued to have only limited access to reproductive healthcare, as a result of the inequity and inefficiency of the private, for-profit healthcare and health insurance industries.

Tonight’s item is to show the City’s Support of a Woman’s Right to Choose.

DISCUSSION:

On May 3, 2022, thousands gathered in cities across the United States to protest a leaked draft decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in the case Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, which would overturn the landmark Roe v. Wade decision.

Overturning Roe v. Wade would disregard the human right to bodily autonomy, which could also set a legal precedent used to overturn healthcare and other legal rights for LGBTQ people, while transgender care is already under assault. People of color, indigenous and other marginalized, low-income people will be most affected in addition to low-income people who already disproportionately face discriminatory barriers to access adequate health care.

Like many others, Sebastopol is appalled to see the leaked opinion indicating that the Supreme Court may overturn Roe v. Wade, which has granted this constitutional right across the United States since 1973. If this increasingly politicized court betrays our Country’s commitment to personal freedom by moving this opinion forwarded, it will set us backwards 50 years.

Sebastopol unequivocally believes that the right to choose is essential to health care for all women, and transgender and nonbinary people who can become pregnant, and that is fundamental to ensuring true freedom,

autonomy, and equity. As such Sebastopol stands united in asking Congress as well President Biden to act with haste to ensure this right is preserved for future generations.

The Sebastopol City Council is not speaking out as a proponent or opponent of abortion, but, only as an advocate of the fundamental right of a woman to choose and we do not feel it is appropriate for Supreme Court of the United States to savagely curtail that right.

We urge the Supreme Court to Reconsider this Potential Decision and Not Overturn Roe v. Wade and continue the support for a Woman's Right to Choose,

CITY COUNCIL AND/OR GENERAL PLAN GOALS:

Goal 5 - Provide Open and Responsive Municipal Government Leadership

5.3.3. Encourage and increase public awareness of City Policies, decisions, programs and all public processes and meetings, by investigating effective methods of communication and obtaining feedback from the community.

Goal 6 - Maintain a highly qualified Staff that works to provide services to serve and protect the residents, visitors and business of this community.

Action CHW 5c: Practice an open-door policy in City programs, and actively engage and encourage participation from all individuals regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, class, disability, sexual orientation, and gender.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if staff receives public comment from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report such comments will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of this item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no cost associated with this item tonight.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is requesting that the City Council Approve the attached Resolution Supporting a Woman's Right to Choose

Attachment:

Resolution Supporting a Woman's Right to Choose

RESOLUTION NO. XXXX-2022

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
IN SUPPORT OF A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

WHEREAS, The City Council of the City of Sebastopol has the duty to promote the economic, cultural and physical welfare of Sebastopol's citizens through mandated legislative functions; and

WHEREAS, A draft opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS), obtained by the news entity Politico, revealed that the landmark Roe v. Wade decision, a bedrock of American law, may be on the verge of being reversed. According to the acquired document, a majority of Supreme Court of the United States privately voted to strike down the historic case; and

WHEREAS, Roe v. Wade (Roe) is the 1973 Supreme Court of the United States decision which guaranteed federal constitutional protections of a women's right to choose in the United States. Now almost 50 years later, these rights are threatened; and

WHEREAS, As news of the impending draft opinion surfaced, suggesting that Roe v. Wade will soon be overturned, crowds of protesters across the country marched and chanted in support of abortion rights in cities throughout the nation, such as New York, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Salt Lake City, Louisville, and here in Detroit; and

WHEREAS, Roe v. Wade, the landmark Supreme Court of the United States decision recognizing and confirming the "right to privacy" in the federal Constitution protects the right for pregnant people to choose to have an abortion prior to viability is in imminent danger of being overturned; and

Whereas, This potential decision could set a dangerous precedent for many other rights we take for granted. Our current laws must continue to protect women's rights to make safe decisions about their own bodies and their own healthcare.

WHEREAS, California is already home to the Reproductive Privacy Act, which provides that every individual possesses a fundamental right to privacy with respect to reproductive decisions; and

WHEREAS, The Sebastopol City Council is not speaking out as a proponent or opponent of abortion, but, only as an advocate of the fundamental right of a woman to choose and we do not feel it is appropriate for Supreme Court of the United States to savagely curtail that right; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sebastopol urges the Supreme Court to Reconsider This Potential Decision and Not Overturn Roe v. Wade.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL declares itself an advocate of the fundamental right of a woman to choose; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL urges the State of California and Sonoma County to increase funding for the rights of women to choose; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL, a steadfast supporter of the unalienable rights of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness," set forth in the Declaration of Independence,

and a woman's right to choose, is echoing the call of President Biden, and is now respectfully requesting that Congress work to codify the Roe decision, thereby providing a nationwide right for women to choose.

The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved and adopted at a meeting by the City Council on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by City of Sebastopol City Council following a roll call vote:

VOTE:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

APPROVED:

Mayor Patrick Slayter

ATTEST:

Mary Gourley, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Larry McLaughlin, City Attorney