

The Delray Democrat

Abortion Access Petition Campaign Update: We Are at a Critical Point but We Can Succeed!¹

Arlene Ustin

Once again Florida's fascistic legislators and Governor are seeking to restrict women's rights. This time it's in terms of women's healthcare, specifically, banning abortion access! Most Americans and most Floridians believe women have the right to control their bodies without interference from any form of government! And every time this issue has been on the ballot, voters have voted in favor of a woman's autonomy. Voters in California, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana, and Ohio have either supported enshrining the right to an abortion in the state constitution or rejected attempts to further restrict abortion.

When we get our Abortion Access Citizen Initiative on the 2024 ballot, it is expected that more than 60% of voters will approve it. Women will then have the protection of the Florida Constitution to make their own personal healthcare decisions. In addition, this issue should increase voter turnout significantly, critical to save our democratic values.

Florida has always depended on its volunteers to fight for the rights and freedom for all, especially those whose voices are ignored or not heard. In this current situation, we are fighting to stay ahead of outrageously blatant bills and laws that continue to restrict our mechanisms for justice. For example, the 2023 law regarding the citizen initiative amendment process changed the method of paying petition gatherers' to be by the hour, not by the petition. Doing so puts more pressure on volunteers to be as creative as possible - we need to carry clipboards to movies, MD offices, family gatherings, county events, all public places are in play, so we can cross the finish line.

Our citizen initiative process for Abortion Access began in mid-May. Many parts of Florida, particularly PBC, have been enthusiastic in this effort. In total we need 892,000 valid petitions and as of November 7, 2023, we have 491,589 (more than half). There are also hundreds of thousands in the pipeline awaiting certification. But we must allow for those that will be rejected. We can do this but we need everyone's help to cross the finish line by December 31, 2023.

To fill out and sign a petition, go to <https://floridiansprotectingfreedom.com/petition/>. Carefully read the instructions—no abbreviations, it's "county," not "country," etc. The pdf is fillable online and can then be printed, or you can also print out a blank form and fill it in by hand. In either case, be sure to sign and date the form by [hand](#). Within 5-7 days send paper petition(s) to Floridians Protecting Freedom, Post Office Box 4068, Sarasota, FL 34230. Print more copies and ask other Florida voters to sign them - five in an envelope costs one regular stamp. **IT IS NOW UP TO US!**

¹ [The Delray Democrat](#), November 2023, page 3.