

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This is such an exciting time! We are now in the home stretch of this election season and have seen so much renewed energy and excitement. Our team at the National Partnership for Women & Families is invigorated by the possibilities that lie ahead to advance policy solutions that build just and equitable systems and improve the lives of all women and their families.

We are keenly aware of the fact that fulfilling the founding promise of our democracy has always been a work in progress. This has been especially true

for women and people of color. Every step forward to this point was fought for and won through persistence, bravery, and organized collective action.

Today, we must continue to fight for every inch of progress. Opponents of progress are working to methodically dismantle our democracy and turn back the clock. We see the fruits of their labor in a series of decisions issued by a conservative faction of the Supreme Court that seems intent on destroying long-held protections for women, erasing hard-won progress in racial equity, limiting (CONTINUED ON P. 2)



National Partnership for Women & Families staff at the Democracy in Action celebration, June 2024



The National Partnership team at the June 2024 Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Federal Courts, Oversight, Agency Action, and Federal Rights' hearing on "Crossing the Line: Abortion Bans and Interstate Travel for Care After Dobbs."

(CONTINUED FROM P. 1) voting rights, dismantling long-held democratic norms, and endangering the core functions of government that create and enforce regulations that protect the public.

Yet, despite all the challenges we face, we feel revitalized by a wellspring of enthusiasm from advocates, activists, and allies who are standing up to fight for the soul of this nation. We are fired up and ready to go.

While the work of the National Partnership is not easy, we are buoyed by your unfailing support. You make all our efforts possible, and you are helping to power a movement for equity at a truly pivotal period in history. We are so proud to share some of the progress we have achieved together. Thank you for being our partner.

In solidarity,

Jocelyn Frye

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Regulatory wins and Supreme Court battles

As pregnant people come under heightened risk of surveillance and criminalization for seeking reproductive care, we've worked closely with the Biden-Harris administration to boost patient protections wherever possible. In April, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a final rule that strengthens patient-provider confidentiality under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The new protections prohibit disclosure of protected health information for the purposes of investigating, suing, or prosecuting anyone for seeking, obtaining, providing, or facilitating reproductive care, including abortion. This is a crucial win thanks to your generous support and the hard work of our team, with

policymakers looking to the National Partnership as the expert and leader in patient rights and privacy protections within reproductive justice.

In May, HHS also issued new Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirements that strengthen anti-discrimination protections across healthcare activities. The new ACA rule clarifies protections for LGBTQI+ patients, expands protections to include more services, and increases accessibility of communication services for non-English speakers and those with disabilities.

We also continue to raise the alarm over the imminent threats posed to the health and well-being of millions of women and families by conservative members of the Supreme Court. In June, the Court temporarily halted an effort to ban mifepristone, one of two pills commonly used for medication abortion. Mifepristone is an FDA-approved, widely-prescribed drug that has been safely used for more than 20 years. While this outcome means that medication abortion remains available, the Court left the door

open to future challenges, which is especially alarming as people increasingly rely on medication abortion as post-Dobbs bans push access to care even further out of reach.

The Court also recently dismissed a case challenging hospitals' duty to provide abortion care in medical emergencies under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA). The June dismissal of Idaho v. United States and Moyle v. United States has left patients able to still access emergency abortion care, at least for now. But there is no guarantee that this will last, and both patients and providers remain mired in confusion over available protections when it comes to emergency abortion care. The case (CONTINUED ON P. 4)

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ESSENCE

HOME · NEWS

More Than Half Of The Black Women In America Ages 15 To 49 Live In States With Little To No Abortion Access

A new study found that 57% of Black women in the U.S. reside in states with abortion bans or impending restrictions that will soon take effect.



(CONTINUED FROM P. 3) highlights how life and health exemption bans for abortion care are unworkable in practice, putting pregnant women's lives at risk.

The National Partnership's work on these cases has included publishing pieces (on the [FDA case](#) and on the [EMTALA case](#)) both before and after these cases were decided to explain the Court's decisions and their impact, numerous interviews with media outlets to discuss the litigation, sustained social media to help the public understand how

these cases are related to the ongoing attacks on abortion care, and significant coordination across a range of advocacy organizations (e.g, health policy, scientific integrity, good government, and medical organizations) to ensure a strong cross-movement response to these cases. For example, we developed talking points for colleagues in maternal health organizations so that they could better understand and explain the broader impact of the EMTALA case on pregnancy-related care. •

Health Justice and Abortion Access

Extremists continue to desperately seek ways to not only curtail access to abortion care, but also infringe on other constitutionally-protected rights, like freedom to travel. Lawmakers in several states have tried to enact policies that would clamp down on people who travel across state lines to seek abortion care, often in times of medical crisis. With your support, we are raising our voices against this challenge.

In June, the National Partnership's President once again was invited to serve as an expert witness in a Senate Judiciary hearing on such policies. Jocelyn [provided compelling testimony](#) on the tremendous dangers of stopping pregnant people from seeking medical care otherwise denied in their home state.

Travel bans disproportionately affect women of color, disabled women, and low-income women, who are more likely to live in maternal healthcare deserts and struggle to find the money and time off from work to travel hundreds of miles away, sometimes across several states, in order to access

the life-saving care they need. Abortion bans and travel bans also further exacerbate the Black maternal mortality crisis, disrupt our healthcare system, and aim to criminalize communities already oppressed under racist and sexist systems.

Jocelyn's quick retorts to GOP Senators attempting to manipulate the issue through sensationalist claims — like Senator John Neely Kennedy's suggestion that women seeking late-term abortions

by choice are a common occurrence — earned her national press coverage from MSNBC's Joy Reid, [the New Republic](#), [Huffington Post](#) and [the Missouri Independent](#).

The debate over abortion has always been about much more than a medical procedure. It is about women's control of their own bodies, autonomy, and dignity in a society that has long sought to deny them as much. The National Partnership will always hold decision makers accountable for willfully distorting the truth in service of their own ambitions and at the expense of the lives, health, and freedom of women and families. •



Tracking the consequences of abortion restrictions

From abortion rights to voting rights, we are connecting the dots across issues that endanger the lives, dignity, and freedom of women, especially multi-marginalized women. Released in May, [Democracy & Abortion Access: Restrictive Voting Laws Threaten Freedoms](#), demonstrates how voting rights and abortion rights are inextricably linked. Last year, state legislators considered over 350 bills restricting voting rights, and at least 14 states enacted voting restrictions. We found a high correlation between voting rights and abortion restrictions. Only three of the 25 states where it is most difficult to vote are categorized as “protective” of abortion rights. These states are home to over 36 million women of reproductive age, who are disproportionately Black, Native American, disabled, and/or economically insecure. Further, with abortion access on the ballot in 10 states during the November 2024 election, [new analysis](#) from the National Partnership shows that more than 16.5 million women of reproductive age could be impacted by changes to reproductive rights laws in their state.

Throughout this year, your support has allowed us to continue to delve deeper into the unequal impacts of abortion restrictions on already marginalized women. Also in May we released [a joint report](#) with our partner, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda, focused on the threats posed to Black women by abortion restrictions. Nearly seven million Black women — which amounts to almost 60% of all Black women of reproductive age — live in states that have banned or are likely to ban abortion. These restrictions are especially dangerous for Black women, who are experiencing an ongoing maternal mortality crisis, and also bear the brunt of the maternal mental health crisis. The report looks at how abortion bans compound the

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State	Cost of Voting Index Ranking	Abortion Access
Oregon	1	Most protective
Washington	2	Protective
Vermont	3	Most protective
Hawai'i	4	Protective
Colorado	5	Protective
California	6	Very protective
Nevada	7	Some restrictions/protections
Utah	8	Very restrictive
Illinois	9	Protective
North Dakota	10	Most restrictive
Virginia	11	Restrictive
Massachusetts	12	Protective
Maryland	13	Very protective
New Jersey	14	Very protective
Maine	15	Protective
Alaska	16	Protective
Delaware	17	Some restrictions/protections
New Mexico	18	Very protective
New York	18	Very protective
West Virginia	20	Most restrictive
North Carolina	21	Very restrictive
Rhode Island	22	Some restrictions/protections
Iowa	23	Restrictive
Minnesota	24	Very protective
Nebraska	25	Very restrictive
Michigan	26	Protective
Arizona	27	Very restrictive
Idaho	28	Most restrictive
Connecticut	29	Protective
Georgia	30	Very restrictive
Louisiana	31	Most restrictive
Pennsylvania	31	Restrictive
Montana	33	Protective
Florida	34	Most restrictive
Oklahoma	35	Most restrictive
Indiana	36	Most restrictive
South Dakota	37	Most restrictive
Kentucky	38	Most restrictive
Kansas	39	Restrictive
Tennessee	40	Most restrictive
Missouri	41	Most restrictive
Ohio	41	Restrictive
Wyoming	43	Restrictive
Wisconsin	44	Restrictive
South Carolina	45	Most restrictive
Alabama	46	Most restrictive
Texas	47	Most restrictive
Arkansas	48	Most restrictive
New Hampshire	49	Some restrictions/protections
Mississippi	49	Most restrictive

Source: Restrictive Voting Law Rankings from Cost of Voting Index 2022. Abortion Access Categories from The Guttmacher Institute, U.S. Abortion Policies Before and After Roe. For more, see methodology note.



Leadership Conference President & CEO Maya Wiley and Jocelyn Frye on the *Fighting for our Freedoms* webinar, July 2024

(CONTINUED FROM P. 5) serious threats to health, dignity, and economic stability that Black women already face. The report also includes polling data from *In Our Voice* showing how abortion bans are already impacting the personal choices Black women make about having children.

We also released a [new analysis](#) on the impacts of abortion bans and restrictions on disabled women. More than half of all disabled women live in states with current or prospective abortion bans. That proportion rises to about 60% for Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native women, and veteran disabled women. The *Dobbs* decision has only exacerbated existing barriers to dignified, equitable medical care — whether

through provider discrimination, denials of care, facility and transport accessibility, and costs of care — that place disabled women at risk. The National Partnership will continue to encourage policymakers to craft solutions that intentionally target the needs of a long-overlooked disabled population, particularly multi-marginalized disabled women.

On May 23, we joined advocates in marking the first Disability Reproductive Equity Day. Disabled women, particularly women of color, not only have unique needs but face some singular challenges in securing reproductive autonomy. The month of May marks the anniversary of a nearly 100-year-old Supreme Court decision, *Buck v. Bell*, upholding a Virginia law allow-



Partners, advocates, and National Partnership staff at the Disability Reproductive Equity Day event, May 2024

ing the forced sterilization of an institutionalized woman. To this day, that decision has yet to be overturned and over 30 states still allow forced sterilization of disabled people. The *Dobbs* decision is another link in a long chain limiting the reproductive freedom of disabled women, especially multi-marginalized women, and further compromises the lives, health and economic future of these women. •

Economic Justice

All workers deserve to have a safe and dignified workplace environment, especially women, and in particular women of color, who are significant drivers of our nation's economy. From working with the administration and partnering with coalition members, to collaborating with leading businesses and powerful unions, the National Partnership continues to work across multiple fronts to ensure this ideal becomes a reality.

In April, we were pleased to see the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) finalize two long-overdue rule updates to help bring

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more stability and safety to millions of workers. For the first time in 25 years, the EEOC updated guidance on workplace harassment rules, helping to clarify the full scope of protections available to workers. Workplace harassment remains a significant issue, both for in-person workplaces, as well as our new hybrid and remote environments. As we work toward economic justice,

it is imperative that all workers know their rights, and have equal access to protection and enforcement.

The EEOC also expanded eligibility for overtime pay, which will help provide much-needed additional income for millions of workers. The new expansion will reach 2.4 million women workers, who are overrepresented in low-paid jobs and work long hours, usually for near-poverty wages. Women of color and disabled women, in particular, are disproportionately likely to hold lower-paying jobs in critical industries like health care and social services as a result of longstanding, systemic gender, racial, and disability injustice. •

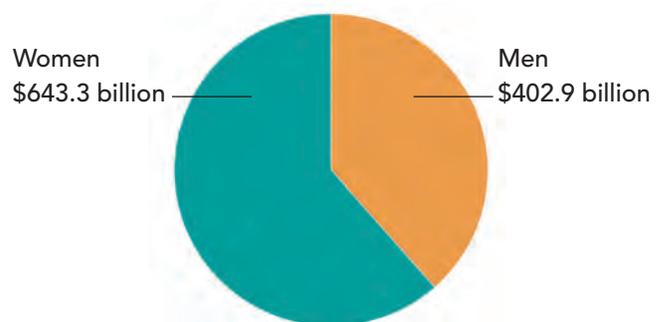
Understanding the Value of Care

This economy and this nation would not function without the caregiving work that is typically performed by women. At the National Partnership, we are committed to illustrating the unique value that women provide to the care economy and connecting the dots between women's economic equity and the wider health of our country.

In June, we released a new analysis tallying the value of all unpaid care labor — two-thirds of which is done by women — at over \$1 trillion annually. The analysis illustrates just how much we undervalue this unpaid labor and the immense impacts on women's economic equity. This research and analysis are critical to our broader work educating decision-makers, the private sector, and the general public about the urgent need to move forward on a national paid leave policy.

The scales of equity simply do not balance when we refuse to see care as a form of labor — one that provides tremendous collective value. With your support, we will continue to leverage our knowledge and expertise to advocate for family-centered policies like paid leave for all, to ensure everyone is able to meet their obligations and receive the respect and compensation they deserve for this often disregarded work. •

America's Unpaid Care is Worth More than \$1 Trillion Annually



Source: National Partnership analysis of 2023 American Time Use Survey. Based on an hourly wage of \$15.74, the midpoint between mean wages for child care workers and home health/personal care aides.

Disability Economic Justice series expands

We have continued to expand our newest portfolio of work around issues facing disabled women. We released the [*Disability Economic Justice Systems Transformation Guide*](#) series, which takes an in-depth look at the unique and often misunderstood challenges facing disabled people. Around 22 million women in the U.S. report a disability, and Indigenous and Black women are more likely to report a disability. Disabled people are more than twice as likely to experience poverty as nondisabled people, and disabled women of color are even more likely to live in poverty.

In April we released two new guides in this series, one focused on public benefits and one focused on wealth-building. For disabled women, particularly women of color, building wealth is about much more than just working on financial literacy — systemic and policy changes are needed to help these women thrive.

Our latest *System Transformation Guides* provide actionable recommendations to legislators and decision makers on a range of issues impacting disabled women's financial futures, like the burden of medical and student loan debt, restrictive asset limits that result in denial of public aid and the need for internet access programs. We hope these guides help leaders to better understand the needs of disabled women and what concrete steps should be taken so that they are not just surviving but can build wealth and thrive. •

The gender wage gap grows for the first time in 20 years

We continue to drill down on the data on wage inequality to debunk old and unhelpful narratives around the wage gap. A [new analysis](#) from the National Partnership reveals that the wage gap for all women workers is now 75 cents, 3 cents wider than last year, and the first time the wage gap has grown in over 20 years. We analyzed Census Bureau data released in September to determine what women in the workplace are paid compared to men, and found that women continue to experience unfair pay practices and unequal pay. Women of color continue to face the widest gaps, and this year, the wage gap widened for each demographic.

The cents-on-the-dollar difference between what men and women are typically paid adds up, resulting in lost wages that mean women have [less money to](#)

[support themselves and their families](#) particularly in the face of rapid inflation.

To commemorate the first ever Disabled Women's Equal Pay Day on September 18, the National Partnership released an [analysis on disabled women](#)

[and the wage gap](#) that finds that disabled women working full time, part time, or part year are only paid 50 cents for every dollar a nondisabled man makes. This pay gap is rooted in a long history of ableism and discrimination.

We hope that by looking more closely at the data, we can shift the narrative toward greater understanding of the unique experiences of women from different racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds and drive policy solutions that lead us on a path toward closing the wage gap.



Recognizing Companies Leading on Leave

The National Partnership understands that in order to achieve the type of foundational social change we envision, we must engage as many stakeholders as possible. Employers have a powerful toolbox when it comes to supporting women and families, from company policies that shape and empower families and individuals such as equal pay and paid family and medical leave to external engagement such as advocating on issues. Moreover, by engaging the private sector we can make progress on issues like paid leave that the federal government has been unable to act on.

One way we do this is by celebrating businesses that are ahead of the pack on equity-focused, family-friendly workplace policies. Through the National Partnership's Leading on Leave Index, companies can showcase their values and policies to potential and current employees in addition to their other stakeholders — from policy leaders to

customers and beyond. The 2024 Leading on Leave Index application will be open through Friday, October 25, 2024. This year we re-launched the Index as an application for employers of all sizes to highlight their efforts to provide comprehensive leave for their employees.

Thanks to the steadfast support of people like you, the National Partnership has been leading on paid leave research for more than 50 years, which makes us uniquely suited to highlight employers' benefits for their workers.

As a tool to showcase the progress being made on paid leave, our Leading on Leave Index offers businesses a unique opportunity to be recognized for their investment in these policies while bringing greater visibility to paid leave best practices for employers and employees alike.

The Index covers benefits offered for full-time and part-time employees and topics ranging from unlimited paid time off to leave for military deployment and more, providing a resource to explore the scope of benefits and better understand how they rank against peers. Those who are accepted into the Index also receive guidance on best practices on how to improve their existing paid leave offerings. •



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Introducing the Lichtman Legacy Fund

In September, we hosted a launch event celebrating the establishment of the Judith L. Lichtman Legacy Fund in recognition of Judy's 50th anniversary as a member of the National Partnership's staff. It was an honor to hear from our special guest speaker, Hillary Rodham Clinton, who spoke about her long-time friendship with Judy and the indelible impact that Judy has had on the lives of countless women and families across the country.

The Lichtman Legacy Fund will support transformative projects and leadership investments that honor Judy's visionary spirit, strategic wisdom, legal expertise, coalition building, and unwavering



Judith Lichtman at the White House Rose Garden FMLA enactment ceremony, February 1993

commitment to equal opportunity and equal justice under the law.

The fund will also create the Judith Lichtman Fellowship, a 12-month position for a recent law graduate to work at the National Partnership as a policy counsel. Our first Lichtman Fellow, Delesiya Davis, was selected from the Women's Law & Public Policy Fellowship Program administered by Georgetown University Law Center. The goals of the Lichtman Fellowship are consistent with Judy's longstanding efforts to mentor young women and launch them into fields such as law, policy, and social activism. We are so excited to share our ongoing progress and accomplishments through this fund with you in the future. •

“For over 50 years, I’ve tried to make this world a better place for women and families. We’ve come a long way, but our work is far from done. My daughters, and all of our children, deserve a future that is truly free of discrimination and where all families have the support they need to succeed at home and on the job. I know from experience — if we can imagine it, we can make it happen.”

The National Partnership **Action Fund Proudly Endorses Kamala Harris** for President!

The National Partnership's sister 501(c)(4) organization, National Partnership for Women & Families Action Fund, has officially endorsed Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee for President in the 2024 election. The Vice President has been a long-time friend of the women's movement, and she is not new to politics and the business of getting things done in Washington. The Action Fund is proud to support her candidacy for this nation's highest office and looks forward to working with her to advance the agenda for women's equity.

The National Partnership for Women & Families Action Fund is the nonprofit, advocacy arm of the National Partnership for Women & Families. The Action Fund engages in legislative advocacy, voter

education, grassroots organizing, and other activities to promote fairness in the workplace, reproductive health and rights, access to quality, affordable health care, and policies that help people meet the dual demands of work and family.

If you wish to receive more information about the Action Fund, you can sign-up to receive email updates [here](#). •

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Vice President Kamala Harris at the National Partnership's Annual Event, June 2017



ADDITIONAL UPDATES

► We are so excited to announce long-time Board member, Shreya Jani as our new Board Chair, as well as welcoming Jennifer M. Ng'andu as our newest Board member. We are also pleased to announce new additions to the National Partnership's leadership team with Sara Goldberg joining as Vice President for Development and Dvora Lovinger as Vice President for Congressional Relations and Social Impact.

► The National Partnership is honored to have been one of several recipient organizations chosen by Melinda French Gates as part of her renewed

philanthropic commitment to gender equity. In May, Gates pledged an additional \$1 billion by 2026 toward advancing women's power globally. We are so grateful for all our donations, big and small, and hope Gates' generous commitment will draw new supporters to the still underfunded space of gender equity.

► Our fourth Listening to Mothers Initiative, collecting the experiences of 4,800 individuals who gave birth in 2023, is coming soon. For the first time, this survey will include oversampling of Indigenous and Asian childbearing people, in addition to capturing Black and Latina experiences. We will share results beginning

in 2025. A rich combined data set will be freely available to interested researchers for secondary analyses at the end of the project. Sign up for updates [here!](#)

► **Save the Date!:** Our 2025 annual event will be hosted on Tuesday, June 3, 2025 at the Conrad Hotel in Washington, D.C. We hope you can celebrate with us. Please stay tuned for additional information.



National Partnership Board Chair Shreya Jani at the Democracy in Action celebration, June 2024



Highlights of the National Partnership's Democracy in Action celebration, June 2024