

ASSEMBLY MEMBER

**Rebecca Bauer-Kahan**

DISTRICT 16

## AB 2099 – Protecting Reproductive Health Clinics

### Summary

AB 2099 protects patients and providers at reproductive health centers by updating the penalties for harassment and violation of a patient's privacy.

### Background and Problem

Individuals who oppose the right to an abortion have always targeted and harassed patients and providers at health centers and abortion clinics across the country. Protesters commonly assemble outside health centers and while some of these protests are peaceful, they can still be harmful and emotionally scarring for both patients and providers. The effects can also cause delays in care.

According to the National Abortion Federation, there's been a significant uptake in extreme anti-choice attacks against abortion clinics since the Supreme Court overturned Roe vs. Wade. Peaceful protests have escalated to violent acts, between 2021 and 2022 there was a 100% increase in arsons at clinics, one instance taking place in Burbank, California<sup>1</sup>. During the same time period, death threats and threats of harm against care providers increased by 20%<sup>2</sup>.

Protestors have started using the internet to target providers, patients, and volunteers. There are a variety of websites that list abortion provider information, including where they practice, their photo, and other personal information. Anti-abortion extremists also commonly take photos of providers and patients, and post them online,

calling them out by name and location. While these offenses can be criminal, it can be difficult for local law enforcement to take action against offenders. The threats and online harassment are not only intimidating but also pose serious personal risk.

Particularly, since the release of the Dobbs vs Jackson decision, California has become one of the few places individuals can receive safe and legal abortions in the United States. With the risk of criminal prosecution that many women face in other states, protecting patient's privacy and health care access in California has become even more crucial.

### What This Bill Does

AB 2099 updates penalties to better deter funded and organized anti-choice extremists. This includes penalties for filming patients and providers with intent to intimidate.

The bill further increases legal protections for providers and patients commensurate with the risks they face. It pre-empts escalations in extremist violence, and protects the rights of vulnerable individuals seeking basic, necessary healthcare.

### Contact

Maren Bick-Maurischat  
Assembly Fellow

[Maren.Bick-Maurischat@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Maren.Bick-Maurischat@asm.ca.gov)  
(916)319-2016

<sup>1</sup> <https://prochoice.org/our-work/provider-security/>

<sup>2</sup> 1