



Idaho

## Governor Little Signs Bounty-Hunting Abortion Ban

*After Texas, Idaho is the second state to enact a ban deputizing private citizens to seek bounties from those who provide abortion care*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BOISE, Idaho — Yesterday, Idaho Gov. Brad Little signed into law SB 1309, a Texas-style copycat that deputizes private citizens to bring lawsuits against health care providers who perform an abortion after six weeks in pregnancy. The law allows family members of both the patient and the “father” of the pregnancy to bring such lawsuits — including family members of a rapist if the pregnancy was the result of sexual assault. Scheduled to go into effect in 30 days, Idaho’s cruel ban would award anyone who successfully sues under this law a bounty of \$20,000 or more, payable by those who were sued.

Texas is a preview of what could come for abortion access in Idaho. Since a similar law went into effect in Texas six months ago, many pregnant people have been forced to travel out of state to get abortion care, inundating clinics in those states and causing ripple effects across the region. Countless others have been unable to get abortion care at all, forcing them to carry pregnancies against their will. As a result, the number of abortions in Texas has been cut in half.

In response, the American Civil Liberties Union and ACLU of Idaho released the following statements:

#### **Lauren Bramwell, policy strategist, ACLU of Idaho:**

“We are disappointed that Governor Little signed yet another bill into law that raises significant constitutional concerns. Our right to abortion shouldn’t depend on where we live. People should be able to control their own bodies, lives and futures. Lawmakers openly touted this bill as a “clever” way to undermine abortion access by evading judicial review. That logic has horrific implications on all of the rights that we hold dear and could open the floodgates to similar laws that deputize private citizens to “enforce” cruel laws that take people’s rights away. Today, it is people’s ability to access abortion. But tomorrow, it could be used to restrict First and Second Amendment rights or, indeed, virtually any

settled or debated constitutional right. It is irresponsible and politically motivated governing that will harm real people who deserve to decide for themselves what is best for them and their families, without political interference. Idahoans deserve better.”

**Jessica Arons, senior policy counsel, ACLU:**

“It’s unconscionable that Idaho politicians witnessed the devastation Texas’ abortion ban caused and decided to inflict the same harm on their own constituents. For more than six months, pregnant Texans have been forced to flee their home state in search of essential health care elsewhere, while others have been forced to remain pregnant against their will. The nightmare Texans have lived with may become the reality in Idaho shortly, as well as in other parts of the country, if the courts continue to abdicate their duty and allow extreme politicians to interfere with our ability to make these most intimate, personal decisions for ourselves and our families. Idaho’s ban, as with every abortion restriction, hits the hardest those who already face the most barriers to health care, including people of color, immigrants, those living in rural areas, and people trying to make ends meet. Your rights shouldn’t depend on your zip code. We’ll continue fighting back against these cruel attacks on our reproductive freedom until everyone can access the abortion care they need, regardless of where they call home.”

This release can be found online here: <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/idaho-governor-signs-bounty-hunting-abortion-ban>

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