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**TEXAS WOMEN LACK KNOWLEDGE OF RECENT ABORTION
RESTRICTIONS,
DO NOT SUPPORT HB2**

AUSTIN (May 20, 2016) — New research from the [Texas Policy Evaluation Project](#) (TxPEP) shows that over half of Texas women had not heard of recent abortion laws, or, if they had, did not know much about the laws' restrictions—including the House Bill 2 (HB2) requirements that physicians have hospital admitting privileges and clinics meet ambulatory surgical center (ASC) standards. Of those women who were aware of the laws, only nineteen percent said that they strongly or somewhat strongly supported them. The article, based on a statewide representative survey of Texas women of reproductive age, was recently published in the academic journal *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*.

Of the surveyed women who strongly or somewhat strongly supported the Texas laws, less than one-third did so because they believed that the laws would make abortion harder to get. Women who identified as conservative Republicans were most likely to say this, but even then, only one in four supported abortion restrictions based on that reason. Fewer than eight percent of less conservative Republicans, Independents, and Democrats supported the laws because they would make abortion harder to get. Instead, the most common reason women gave for supporting the Texas laws was that they believed that the laws make abortion safer.

Dr. Kari White, lead author of the study and an Assistant Professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham says, “While some politicians claim that laws like HB2 are necessary to improve women’s health and safety, medical evidence shows that abortion is very safe as currently practiced. Rates of serious complications are less than one quarter of one percent, and abortions performed in an ASC are no safer than those performed in an outpatient clinic.”

TxPEP lead investigator and study co-author Dr. Joseph Potter writes, “It’s clear that women who are most directly impacted by these restrictive laws—those of reproductive age—are not fully aware of their content and do not support them. These women are not driving the legislation.”

Currently the United States Supreme Court is considering *Whole Woman’s Health v. Hellerstedt*. The ruling, expected in June, will determine whether the provisions in HB2 that require physicians performing abortion to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital and those that require facilities that provide abortions to meet the standards of ASCs can go into effect. The plaintiffs in the case argued that these restrictions are medically unnecessary and thus impose an undue burden on women. Since three of four provisions of HB2 have gone into effect, nearly half the clinics in Texas have closed, [leaving more than double the number of women in Texas 100 miles from the nearest clinic](#), [lengthening wait times](#) to get an abortion appointment, and [increasing the financial and logistical barriers](#) to obtaining care.

Read the full article at the following link:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1363/48e8716/abstract>

If you would like to receive more information about this topic or schedule an interview with Kari White, please contact Laura Dixon at ldixon@prc.utexas.edu or (512) 788-2653.

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The [Texas Policy Evaluation Project](#), or TxPEP, is a five-year comprehensive effort to document and analyze the impact of the measures affecting reproductive health passed by the 82nd and 83rd Texas Legislatures. The project team includes researchers at the University of Texas Population Research Center, the University of California San Francisco, Ibis Reproductive Health, and the University of Alabama-Birmingham. The project is supported by grants from the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation and the Society of Family Planning. Infrastructure support for the Population Research Center is provided by a grant from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.