



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reproductive Rights: UCF Turns to States and Companies

New York, May 11, 2022 – In the wake of the Supreme Court draft majority opinion that would overturn *Roe v. Wade*, United Church Funds (UCF) has announced that it will continue the fight for legal abortion and women's reproductive rights by focusing attention and engagement on states and large employers.

Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113 (1973), the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision protecting a woman's right to choose to have an abortion without excessive government restriction, was put in jeopardy last week after an initial draft majority opinion, written by Justice Samuel Alito and signed by four other justices, was leaked to the public. If the 50-year precedent is overturned, it would end federal protection of abortion and throw the issue of legality to each U.S. state legislature.

Earlier this year, in anticipation of the Supreme Court's decision, UCF and its partners at the Reproductive Health Investors Alliance (rhiaventures.org) sent out letters to over 1,000 legislators in 12 states urging them not to support bills that would restrict access to abortion. The 12 states are Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, Minnesota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

Letters were also sent to over 200 companies in those states, urging them to use their influence with lawmakers to protect women's reproductive rights.

Charles Buck, UCF President and CEO, said, "The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* would deprive women's reproductive rights nationwide. In line with numerous UCC General Synod resolutions, UCF believes that comprehensive reproductive and maternal healthcare is an essential right for all. We remain committed to leveraging our portfolio and pursuing shareholder advocacy to protect this right, and we will do so by taking the fight to states and large employers in those states."

This past September, Texas passed the most restrictive abortion law in the nation, effectively banning all abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. Copycat bills have been proposed in Alabama, Maryland, Missouri, Minnesota, Ohio, Oklahoma and Wisconsin. West Virginia's legislature is considering a bill that would ban abortion at 15 weeks, similar to a 15-week ban in Mississippi, which is the case awaiting final decision by the Supreme Court that could ultimately overturn *Roe*.

The potential overturning of Roe would also create a challenging situation for corporations, related to the health and well-being of their employees, the ability to recruit and retain top talent, and the economic loss and potential legal liability for providing insurance that covers elective abortions.

A report by Rhia Ventures, *Hidden Value: The Business Case for Reproductive Health*, identifies five critical reasons why U.S. businesses should invest in reproductive health care benefits and support public policies that enhance reproductive health access for all women:

1. Expanding the talent pool and attracting talent
2. Supporting and retaining existing talent
3. Realizing high-impact benefits with low-cost investments
4. Delivering on diversity and inclusion commitments
5. Preparing for greater scrutiny from consumers and other stakeholders, who are increasingly calling on corporations to take stands on social issues.

"For UCF, reproductive health care is both a business issue and a matter of human rights," Buck added. "And we want to ensure our clients that UCF will continue advocating and pressing for these rights. We will use our voice and our tools of shareholder activism to ensure that our investments support a just world for all."

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About United Church Funds

United Church Funds (UCF) is the leading provider of socially responsible, values-aligned investment management services to United Church of Christ churches and ministries, as well as all faith-based organizations. We offer customized investment portfolios and prudent investment strategies that provide competitive returns while also reflecting our clients' values in seeking to achieve a just world. UCF also offers endowment governance consulting, planned giving programs and superior, personalized service from our dedicated Client Services team. To learn more about how UCF can help your church or faith-based organization further its mission while achieving its long-term financial goals, please visit www.ucfunds.org, email us at info@ucfunds.org or call us toll-free at 877-806-4989.