

Topline Results
Survey of Voters on Abortion
Fielded January 20 to January 27, 2016
N = 1,060 registered voters 18 and older
Margin of sampling error = ± 3.7 percentage points
February 4, 2016

Introduction

1. How often do you feel the topic of abortion comes up in political campaigns and debates?

Frequently	38
Sometimes	44
Not too often	15
Rarely or never	3
DK/REF	0

2. Outside of politics, how often do you hear about the issue of abortion?

Frequently	10
Sometimes	38
Not too often	35
Rarely or never	17
DK/REF	1

3. What do you tend to hear more from the news media?

The politics around abortion	67
The facts around abortion	7
I'm not sure	26
DK/REF	1

4. How often does the topic of abortion come up in conversation in your daily life?

Frequently	2
Sometimes	14
Not too often	28
Rarely or never	57
DK/REF	0

5. Have you ever talked with someone about the experience of having an abortion or the decision to have one?

Yes.....37
 No63
 DK/REF0

Views on abortion

6. Let's say a woman has decided to have an abortion. Would you want the experience to be: RANDOMIZE PAIRS AND ORDER WITHIN PAIRS

With burden30
 Without burden68
 DK/REF3

Supportive76
 Unsupportive22
 DK/REF2

Able to get an abortion in her community76
 Have to travel to another community to get an abortion.....22
 DK/REF3

Comfortable77
 Uncomfortable21
 DK/REF2

Informed by medically inaccurate or misleading information....3
 Informed by medically accurate and unbiased information ...95
 DK/REF2

Respectful of her decision76
 Pressure to change her mind22
 DK/REF2

Affordable74
 Not affordable23
 DK/REF2

With picketers17
 Without picketers.....79
 DK/REF4

Legal81
 Illegal.....18
 DK/REF2

Difficult in terms of travel and logistics.....	23		
Not difficult in terms of travel and logistics	75		
DK/REF	2		
7. Let's say a woman has decided to have an abortion. Would you want the abortion care to be...			
In her community	63		
10 to 30 miles away	13		
30 to 60 miles away	6		
60 to 100 miles away	3		
100 to 200 miles away	1		
200 or more miles away.....	11		
DK/REF	3		
8. Do you label yourself as: ROTATE FIRST TWO			
	Split A (N=522)	Split B (N=538)	
Pro-choice	35	35	
Pro-life	29	23	
Both	18	21	
Neither	17	15	
SPLIT B: I'm not sure.....	-	5	
DK/REF	0	1	
9. In 1973, the Supreme Court's <i>Roe v. Wade</i> decision established a woman's constitutional right to have an abortion. Would you like to see the Supreme Court overturn its <i>Roe v. Wade</i> decision, or not?			
Overturn <i>Roe v. Wade</i>	27		
Do not overturn <i>Roe v. Wade</i>	70		
DK/REF	3		

Knowledge

10. Would you say abortion is more common, less common, or about as common as it was about a decade ago?

More common	24
Less common	16
About the same	33
I'm not sure.....	26
DK/REF	1

11. Based on what you have heard, how safe is having an abortion?

Very safe	31
Somewhat safe	39
Not too safe	8
Not safe at all.....	6
I'm not sure.....	16
DK/REF	1

ROTATE Q12-Q14

12. If you had to guess, what is your sense: is giving birth more safe, less safe, or about as safe as an abortion?¹

More safe than an abortion	37
Less safe than an abortion	19
About as safe as an abortion.....	43
DK/REF	2

13. If you had to guess, what is your sense: is a colonoscopy more safe, less safe, or about as safe as an abortion?²

More safe than an abortion	48
Less safe than an abortion	9
About as safe as an abortion.....	42
DK/REF	2

¹ According to a [study](#) published in the journal Obstetrics & Gynecology, the risk of death associated with childbirth is approximately 14 times higher than that with abortion

² 0.23% of abortions result in a major complication compared to 0.35% of colonoscopy (according to a [study](#) published by the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy).

14. If you had to guess, what is your sense: is getting a wisdom tooth removed more safe, less safe, or about as safe as an abortion?³

More safe than an abortion	54
Less safe than an abortion	8
About as safe as an abortion.....	36
DK/REF	2

15. As far as you know, are most abortion procedures done through surgery, or not?⁴

Yes.....	22
No	26
I'm not sure.....	51
DK/REF	1

16. How long do you think a typical abortion procedure takes? Your best guess is fine.⁵

5 to 15 minutes	8
15 to 30 minutes	27
30 to 45 minutes	25
45 to 60 minutes	18
60 to 90 minutes	11
90 minutes to 2 hours	4
2 to 3 hours.....	2
More than 3 hours	2
DK/REF	3

17. Are all abortion clinics required to meet health and safety regulations like other similar health centers, or not?

Yes.....	57
No	8
I'm not sure.....	35
DK/REF	1

³ 0.23% of abortions result in a major complication compared to 7% of wisdom tooth extractions (according to a [study](#) published in the journal Obstetrics & Gynecology and a [Time article](#)).

⁴ [According to Planned Parenthood](#), the two most common kind of in-clinic abortion are aspiration abortion and dilation & evacuation, neither of which require an incision or surgery.

⁵ [According to Planned Parenthood](#), the most common in-clinic abortion is an aspiration abortion, which takes 5 to 10 minutes.

18. Are all doctors who provide legal abortions licensed medical professionals like other doctors, or not?

Yes.....	60
No	8
I'm not sure.....	31
DK/REF	1

19. Have you ever heard of a medication abortion? This is different from Plan B or the morning after pill.

Yes.....	31
No	44
I'm not sure.....	24
DK/REF	1

20. If you had to guess, what percent of women in the US do you think will have an abortion in her lifetime? Your best guess is fine.⁶

Less than 5%	14
5% to 9%	13
10% to 14%	14
15% to 19%	10
20% to 24%	10
25% to 29%	9
30% to 34%	8
35% to 39%	5
40% to 44%	3
45% to 49%	1
50% to 54%	5
55% to 59%	1
60% to 64%	2
65% to 69%	1
70% to 74%	0
75% to 79%	1
80% to 84%	1
85% to 89%	0
90% to 94%	0
95% to 100%	0
DK/REF	2
<30%	70
30% to 34%	8
35%+	20

⁶ According to a 2011 [Guttmacher Institute report](#), approximately 30% of women will have an abortion in her lifetime.

21. As far as you know, is abortion care generally covered by health insurance, or not?

Yes.....	14
No	36
I'm not sure.....	50
DK/REF	1

22. Let's say abortion care is not covered by health insurance. What is your sense – would the costs of an abortion be:

Very affordable	5
Somewhat affordable	22
Somewhat expensive	45
Very expensive.....	11
I'm not sure.....	15
DK/REF	2

23. Do you know what laws are in place around abortion, or not? It's okay if you are not sure.

Yes.....	17
No	17
I'm not sure.....	66
DK/REF	1

SPLIT A: Is each of these a law right now, either at the national level or in any states? It is okay if you are not sure – just say so. RANDOMIZE (N=522)⁷

	Yes, this is a law in some states or nationally	No, this is not a law	I'm not sure
24. Women under age 18 must get a parent's written consent before getting an abortion	48	15	37
25. Women are required to undergo an ultrasound, whether or not the doctor says it is necessary, and the doctor must display the image in front of the woman	25	22	53
26. Women are required to make multiple, medically unnecessary appointments for an abortion	14	31	54
27. Doctors are required to give women medically inaccurate information about the risks of abortion	13	46	41
28. Private insurance plans are prohibited from covering abortion care	9	26	64
29. Doctors who provide abortions are required to get permission from nearby hospitals to become part of their admitting staff	21	17	61
30. Abortion clinics are required to rebuild their centers to meet standards for ambulatory surgical centers or else shut down	23	14	63
31. Specially trained, certified nurse midwives, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners can provide early abortions	18	13	69

⁷ http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_OAL.pdf

Supreme Court Case

32. Have you heard anything about the Supreme Court taking on a new case about abortion?

Yes.....	15
No	65
I'm not sure.....	20
DK/REF	1

The Supreme Court will actually be taking a new case about abortion. We'd like your opinion, but it takes a little while to explain the case.⁸

Here are the facts of the case. We also give some facts about abortion that relate to the case. If you want more information there will be a link at the end of the survey. Thank you for taking the time to read this and respond.

The Supreme Court case will be based on a recent law passed in Texas. In 2013, the Republican governor and Republican state legislators in Texas passed a law on abortion. The law has two parts that the Supreme Court will review.

One part of the law [ROTATE] requires all doctors who provide abortions in Texas to get admitting privileges from a hospital no further than 30 miles from the clinic they provide care in. The law does not require hospitals to grant those privileges.

To get admitting privileges, hospitals often require doctors to admit a certain number of patients in a year. One issue is that abortion procedures are very safe so doctors are unlikely to have any patients to admit. For example, complications from a wisdom tooth extraction are three times more likely to happen than complications from an abortion (7% of wisdom tooth extractions have a complication vs. 2% of abortions). The risk of hospitalization from an abortion is close to 0% (0.23%).

As a result of this law, several clinics in Texas have closed either because a hospital wouldn't grant admitting privileges or because doctors don't have any patients to admit.

This law only applies to abortion providers, not to any other type of doctor.

⁸ <http://www.scotusblog.com/2015/11/court-to-rule-on-abortion-clinic-restrictions/>

33. Do you favor or oppose this Texas law that requires abortion providers to have admitting privileges?

Favor	27
Oppose	42
I'm not sure	30
DK/REF	1

The Supreme Court is also looking at another part of the Texas law. [ROTATE] This part requires all abortion clinics to be remodeled or rebuilt into “ambulatory surgical centers” or else shut down. These are buildings for major surgery and have regulations covering things from the size of hallways and doors to specific details about the operating rooms. Abortion providers have said rebuilding a clinic into an ambulatory surgical center can cost more than \$1 million dollars.

Most abortions happen in the first trimester. The methods tend to be medication abortion or a vacuum aspiration procedure, which is done without incisions. A typical abortion procedure takes between 5 and 15 minutes and is done in a clinic setting. There are health and safety regulations currently in place for clinics.

As a result of this law, clinics in Texas have closed and more could close depending on the Supreme Court ruling. They have closed because of the costs involved in rebuilding clinics into ambulatory surgical centers.

This law about ambulatory surgical centers only applies to abortion providers. It does not apply to any other outpatient clinics that perform surgical procedures.

34. Do you favor or oppose this law that requires abortion clinics to be remodeled or rebuilt into ambulatory surgical centers?

Favor	27
Oppose	46
I'm not sure	26
DK/REF	1

KEEP NEXT THREE PARAGRAPHS AND Q35 ON ONE PAGE

In 2012, there were 41 abortion clinics in Texas. As a result of the 2013 law, 22 clinics have closed, leaving 19 that remain open. More clinics could close depending on the outcome of the Supreme Court ruling.⁹

The average county in Texas is now 111 miles from an abortion provider. In some parts of the state, women have to travel more than 250 miles to get to the nearest abortion clinic.¹⁰

Right now federal law says that women have a right to an abortion without “undue burden.” The law says an undue burden is “a state law or regulation that has the purpose or effect of placing a substantial obstacle in the path of a woman seeking an abortion of a nonviable fetus.”

35. Do you think the Texas law puts an undue burden on women who are seeking an abortion, or not?

Yes.....	65
No	32
DK/REF	3

36. Think about women in Texas who have decided to have an abortion. Do you think the Texas law makes women: ROTATE FIRST TWO

More safe.....	12
Less safe.....	40
Has no effect on safety.....	23
I’m not sure.....	24
DK/REF	1

⁹ <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/a5e39eb9c1a646ecb4a1a31bbba9774c/supreme-court-blocks-texas-abortion-clinic-rules>

¹⁰ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/20/upshot/how-texas-could-set-national-template-for-limiting-abortion-access.html>

37. Some groups say these laws are about women's safety and some groups say these laws are about politics, not safety. Who would you trust on whether or not these laws help improve women's safety? Select any that apply. RANDOMIZE

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (the national OBGYN professional association)	50
The American Medical Association	45
Abortion providers	20
National Right to Life	12
Democrat legislators	7
Republican legislators	5
None of the above	26
DK/REF	3

38. Who do you think should be in charge of setting standards for women's health and safety when it comes to abortion? Select any that apply. RANDOMIZE

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (the national OBGYN professional association)	57
The American Medical Association	49
National medical experts who study health and safety	41
The Supreme Court	6
State legislatures	6
Democrat legislators	3
Members of Congress	2
Republican legislators	2
None of the above	18
DK/REF	3

Here are some other facts about abortion in Texas¹¹. Do you think each of these things adds an undue burden for women seeking an abortion, or not?
RANDOMIZE

	Yes, adds an undue burden	No, does not add an undue burden
39. Some women have to wait weeks for an appointment because clinics have closed. This delays the abortion until later in the pregnancy and increases costs.	72	25
40. Women are required by law to have at least one medically unnecessary appointment for an in-clinic abortion and multiple medically unnecessary appointments for a medication abortion.	61	35
41. Women are required by law to receive state directed counseling at the clinic prior to a mandatory 24-hour waiting period.	42	55
42. Women who have Medicaid cannot use that coverage to pay for costs unless the abortion is for reasons of rape, incest, or if her life is in danger.	55	41
43. When women have to travel many miles outside their community for an abortion, it means costs for transportation, food, taking time off work, and a motel. An overnight stay is often needed because the law requires one appointment to happen at least 24 hours before a second appointment.	67	30
44. The law in Texas requires women to have a sonogram, whether or not it is medically necessary. The law requires doctors to display the image in front of the woman. The law also requires doctors to make the heartbeat audible and to describe parts of the fetus in detail. The law applies to all women except those who became pregnant as a result of rape or incest or those who found out their fetus had a medical problem.	57	40

¹¹ <http://data.rhrealitycheck.org/law/texas-omnibus-abortion-bill-hb-2-2013/>

45. Now that you've learned more about the laws in Texas, do you think all of the laws in Texas put an undue burden on women who are seeking an abortion, or not?

Yes.....61
 No36
 DK/REF3

46. Many states have recently proposed or passed laws that put obstacles in the path of women seeking an abortion¹². The laws are very similar to those in Texas. Do you think these laws are moving in the right direction or the wrong direction?

Right direction32
 Wrong direction65
 DK/REF4

SPLIT B: Here are some laws that are in place either at the national level or in some states. Do you favor or oppose each of these current laws?
 RANDOMIZE (N=538)¹³

	Favor this law	Oppose this law
47. Women under age 18 must get a parent's written consent before getting an abortion	71	26
48. Women are required to undergo an ultrasound, whether or not the doctor says it is necessary, and the doctor must display the image in front of the woman	41	56
49. Women are required to make multiple, medically unnecessary appointments for an abortion	28	68
50. Doctors are required to give women medically inaccurate information about the risks of abortion	13	83
51. Private insurance plans are prohibited from covering abortion care	31	65
52. Doctors who provide abortions are required to get permission from nearby hospitals to become part of their admitting staff	42	54
53. Abortion clinics are required to rebuild their centers to meet standards for ambulatory surgical centers or else shut down	39	58
54. Specially trained, certified nurse midwives, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners can provide early abortions	58	39

¹² <http://www.guttmacher.org/media/inthenews/2016/01/04/index.html>

¹³ http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_OAL.pdf

Here is more information about the case if you are interested:

<http://www.scotusblog.com/2015/11/court-to-rule-on-abortion-clinic-restrictions/>

Demographics

Gender

Female	48
Male	52

Race

White.....	70
Black/African-American.....	11
Latino.....	13
Other.....	5
2+ races.....	1

Age

18 to 29.....	16
30 to 44.....	24
45 to 59.....	29
60+.....	32

Income

<\$25,000.....	14
\$25,000 to \$49,999.....	20
\$50,000 to \$99,999.....	37
\$100,000+.....	27

Education

High school or less.....	35
Some college.....	31
Bachelor's degree or higher	34

Marital status

Married.....	54
Widowed.....	5
Divorced	12
Separated	2
Never married	24
Living with partner	4

Party ID

Strong Republican	17
Not strong Republican.....	11
Leans Republican	16
Independent/Undecided	2
Leans Democrat	18
Not strong Democrat	16
Strong Democrat	20

Region

Northeast	19
Midwest	22
South	37
West.....	23

Preliminary