

Chilean government confirms it will deny women access to free abortions



Santiago de Chile, August 2 (RHC)-- The government of right-wing Chilean President Sebastián Piñera has made clear that it rejects legislation decriminalizing abortion. “If the bill about so-called free abortion passes, the President fully opposes it and will use all constitutional means, as he has already said, in order to impede this to become law,” said Interior Minister Andrés Chadwick.

Chadwick added that Piñera's administration also opposed same-sex marriage: “We believe that marriage is between a man and a woman because we believe this is not just rooted on faith or a religious belief, but also human nature.”

Though Argentina has yet to pass its 14-week abortion bill, Chile's struggle might be more difficult than its neighbors has been so far: until last year, abortions in Chile were illegal. It took two years of negotiations before legislatures approved a law last August that decriminalized abortion in three cases: if the life of the pregnant female is at risk; if the pregnancy is the result of rape; or if the fetus can't survive outside the womb.

However, when conservative President Sebastián Piñera took office in March, his administration rolled

back these few long-fought rights when his Health Ministry announced that private clinics could refuse to carry out the procedure on grounds of conscientious objection.

The Minister of Women and Gender Equality, Isabel Pla, said: "In a democracy, there are no vetoed issues. The government of President Sebastian Piñera has a position in this matter that is unchanged, that the Chileans have known and that they will know and that it will always be the same: that is the defense of life."

This is Piñera's second term as president after his 2010-2014 administration. He has accumulated a massive fortune, which Forbes estimates at about \$3 billion, due to his investment activities in airlines, supermarkets, and soccer clubs.

Meanwhile, Argentina's right-wing president, Mauricio Macri, has said that if the approved by the nation's house and senate he would sign the abortion bill into law.

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