

U.S. Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade, effectively banning abortions



People protest in response to the Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization ruling in front of the U.S. Supreme Court on June 24, 2022 in Washington, DC. The Court's decision in Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health overturns the landmark 50-year-old Roe v Wade case and erases a federal right to an abortion. (Photo by Brandon Bell/Getty Images)

Washington, June 24 (RHC)-- The U.S. Supreme Court on Friday overturned Roe v. Wade, effectively ending recognition of a constitutional right to abortion and giving individual states the power to allow, limit or ban the practice altogether.

As the Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade, Chief Justice John Roberts agreed with the majority in upholding a Mississippi law restricting abortion, but wanted to stop short of overturning Roe itself.

The high court ruled 6-3 in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, to uphold a Mississippi law that banned abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy. The Republican-led state of Mississippi asked the Supreme Court to strike down a lower court ruling that stopped the 15-week abortion ban from taking place.

However, while concurring with the majority in overturning the Mississippi law, Roberts was critical of his colleagues in taking the additional step of overturning both Roe and the 1992 Casey v Planned Parenthood decision.

"We end this opinion where we began. Abortion presents a profound moral question. The Constitution does not prohibit the citizens of each State from regulating or prohibiting abortion. Roe and Casey arrogated that authority. We now overrule those decisions and return that authority to the people and their elected representatives," Justice Samuel Alito wrote in the court's opinion.

But Roberts, in his separate concurrence, said he would take "a more measured course." He faults Roe and says its "viability" standard -- whereby a woman is said to have a right to an abortion until the fetus is deemed to be able to survive outside the uterus -- set by Roe should be discarded ("That line never made any sense") and the right to an abortion "should therefore extend far enough to ensure a reasonable opportunity to choose, but need not extend any further -- certainly not all the way to viability."

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