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Governor Wolf Vetoes Anti-Choice Bill that Severely Limits Women's Health Care Options

Philadelphia, PA – Today, Governor Tom Wolf vetoed Senate Bill 3, the anti-choice legislation that would severely limit women's reproductive rights and health care options. He was joined by Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney, legislators, local elected officials, and women's reproductive rights advocates for the event in the Mayor's Reception Room.

"This legislation is a disingenuous and bald-faced attempt to create the most extreme anti-choice legislation in the country," Governor Wolf said. "This legislation is an attempt to criminalize the decisions that women make about their own health care, and this legislation destroys health care options for victims of the horrors of rape and incest. For these reasons, I am vetoing this bill today."

The legislation, which passed the House by a 121-70 vote, would ban abortions after twenty weeks except in the rarest of circumstances, leaving no exceptions for rape, incest, health, or tragic fetal anomalies. The bill would also ban one of the safest methods of second trimester abortions, putting women at risk and taking crucial decisions about their medical care out of the hands of their trusted medical providers.

"I fully support the Governor's decision to veto this bill," Mayor Kenney said. "The state should not be telling women—particularly women who became pregnant by rape or incest—that they don't have the right to decide what to do with their body. These women are victims and they should not be victimized again by this law."

"The careful thoughtfulness that we hoped would guide our legislators was absent," said Deborah Minkoff, Commissioner, the Pennsylvania Commission for Women. "SB 3 has no exception for rape. The legislature is forcing a girl or woman to continue a pregnancy that resulted from a criminal act. Despite our expectation of thoughtful decision-making, the absence of a rape exception is thoughtless and heartless."

"New Voices is committed to the health and well-being of women across Pennsylvania," said La'Tasha D. Mayes, Executive Director, New Voices for Reproductive Justice. "We are most concerned about the disproportionate impact of such a law on the health and well-being of Black women and women of color. We stand in solidarity with Governor Wolf in his courageous veto of Senate Bill 3 - a dangerous bill that undermines the Human Right of women to control our bodies and our reproduction."

"Thanks to Governor Wolf, women like me will maintain both our freedom to believe what the science tells us about our unborn children and the self-determination to make our own decisions about our bodies," Dr. Erica Goldblatt Hyatt said.

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NOTE: Video, audio, and photos from this event will be available for download later today by email from the Pennsylvania Internet News Service (PINS) and PAcast.com.

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