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Physician Community Calls on Arizona to Protect Reproductive Health

September 26, 2022 (PHOENIX) — The Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) is deeply concerned about the status of Arizona’s public health in the wake of the decision to lift the injunction on the state’s pre-statehood pregnancy termination ban. As a result of the enforcement of this overreaching legislation, health care in our state will experience several severe and negative consequences, including:

- significantly decreased access to forms of reproductive health care, which will threaten patients’ health outcomes;
- inappropriate interference in the physician-patient relationship, the sanctity of which is the bedrock of our health care system; and
- the performance of evidence-based medical procedures becoming a criminal offense.

The enforcement of Arizona’s near-total ban on pregnancy termination will have devastating impacts on patients’ health and well-being. With little access to pregnancy termination services in the state, patients with the means to do so will be forced to travel out of the state to receive the care they need. Patients without the means to travel will be forced to make difficult and potentially dangerous decisions about managing their health, likely without guidance from their physician. Inevitably, health outcomes will be impacted negatively.

“Independent of politics, pregnancy termination is an evidence-based procedure and one of the many components of reproductive health care,” stated ArMA’s President, Jennifer Hartmark-Hill, MD. “When physicians and their patients are barred from essential medical care, negative outcomes result at the individual level, at the population health level, and societally. Health care is highly individualized, meaning clinical decisions must be based on open and honest conversations with your patients without the encroachment of undue restrictions.”

Physicians are highly trained medical professionals, and they are the most qualified to inform and guide patients in matters related to their health. Determining the best method of care for an individual is a shared clinical decision between patient and physician in an effort to improve the health outcome of the

patient. In order to maximize health outcomes, physicians and their patients must retain access to safe and established medical practices unimpeded by governmental intervention. Ultimately, legislating access to medical care jeopardizes the health and safety of patients.

Across Arizona and the nation at large, there is an overwhelming amount of solidarity within the health care community regarding policies on reproductive health care. Our community stands ready to provide its guidance and input on health care policy; through collaboration and understanding, our state can craft legislation that is well-informed, in alignment with the standards of patient care, and a catalyst for making Arizona a safer, happier, and healthier place to live.

As the largest physician-led organization in the state, ArMA is committed to improving public health in Arizona by fighting for patients' right to access appropriate health care and against the criminalization of the physician community. As we look ahead to Arizona's 2023 Legislative Session, ArMA is determined to ardently advocate for strong public health policy and defend against harmful health care legislation. ArMA remains assured that future collaboration will lead to effective legislation, legislation that will safeguard the health and safety of every patient in Arizona.

If we truly want to move our state forward, we cannot act as our own roadblock; let us work towards a brighter future for health care together.

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About Arizona Medical Association

The Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) is the largest organization in the state representing the interests of all physicians. Since 1892, ArMA has been advancing patient care and providing its members with leadership, advocacy, education, and community. For more information, visit www.AZmed.org and follow ArMA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).