

## **The Reproductive Health Travel Fund Act**

Introduced by Senators Tammy Baldwin (WI) and Patty Murray (WA), and Congresswomen Marilyn Strickland (WA-10), Lizzie Fletcher (TX-07), and Cori Bush (MO-01)

*A bill to support organizations that assist women who are forced to travel to seek abortion services*

**Background:** On June 24, 2022, in its decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, the Supreme Court overruled *Roe v. Wade*, reversing decades of precedent recognizing the constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy. This decision has decimated access to abortion for millions of people in the U.S. States like Wisconsin, Ohio, Georgia and Arizona have reverted to banning most procedures, undermining women's freedom to make their own decisions about their health and their families.

In the wake of this decision, abortion funds and practical support funds are serving a critical need. These community-based organizations support people in overcoming financial and logistical barriers to abortion care, including transportation, food, lodging, childcare, and translation services, among other expenses.

**Now that *Roe* has been overturned, it is vital that we provide the support and assistance needed for women to be able to make their own health care decisions.**

**The Reproductive Health Travel Fund Act** would set up a grant program, authorized at \$350 million per year for FY24 through FY28, to help ease the financial burden associated with traveling long distances to access safe and legal reproductive health care. Specifically, the bill would allow the Treasury Secretary to award grants to eligible entities to pay for travel-related expenses and logistical support for individuals accessing abortion services. Funds, made available through a competitive grant, could be used for:

- Round trip travel to the location where abortion services are provided
- Lodging
- Meals
- Childcare
- Translation services
- Doula care
- Patient education and information services
- Lost wages

Eligible entities include non-profit organizations or community-based organizations that assist individuals seeking abortions through programs, services or activities that are unbiased and medically and factually accurate. In making grants available, the Secretary must prioritize entities that serve people who live in a jurisdiction that has banned or severely restricted access to abortion; serve those who travel to a jurisdiction other than the one where they live to be provided abortion services; and have a program in operation that helps patients access abortion services. The bill also requires that the Secretary submit a report to Congress on this effort. Finally, the bill includes a provision protecting federal officials administering the program from being forced to cooperate in antiabortion investigations, prosecutions, or civil lawsuits.