Speed Date...
To Legislate

Issue: Reproductive Rights

Bill: H.B. 136, Abortion Amendments
Sponsor: Rep. Cheryl Acton (R-West Jordan)

What it does:

Moves the point at which a person can obtain an abortion in Utah from viability (generally 23-24 weeks) to 15 weeks' gestation. Effectively banning abortion after the last day of the 14th week of pregnancy (of 40 weeks total), except in the case of rape or incest, the life of the mother, to prevent serious bodily injury to the mother, or the fetus is diagnosed with a lethal anomaly.
The stated intention behind the bill is to prevent abortion in the second trimester of pregnancy to protect women's health.

Why it matters:

Roe v. Wade was a landmark 1973 Supreme Court case that affirms a woman's legal right to an abortion. The Court ruled, in a 7-2 decision, that a woman's right to choose an abortion was protected by the privacy rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The legal precedent for the decision was rooted in the 1965 case of Griswold v. Connecticut, which established the right to privacy involving medical procedures.
Despite this precedent, anti-women's health Utah legislators continue to attack abortion access through legislative restrictions. With the confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh, anti-abortion groups believe that the stage is set to reverse or amend Roe v. Wade, which could open the door for states to regulate and restrict abortion.

Key Questions:

Does a pregnant person's right to make private medical decisions end at 15 weeks? Is abortion a federal issue or a state issue? Should the Utah Legislature pass an unconstitutional bill, and spend tax dollars to litigate the case, with the hope that the case will make it to the U.S. Supreme Court and invite a revision to Roe v. Wade?

Instructions: As a group, spend the next five minutes crafting a pitch to lobby your expert to defeat H.B. 136.