

Women coast to coast demand: Bans off our bodies!

written by Sharon Black
October 8, 2021



Austin, Texas

Washington, D.C., Oct. 2 — Hundreds of thousands of people came out across the U.S. to protest not only the reactionary Texas “heartbeat law,” but growing attacks on reproductive rights in many other states.

Women marched not only in large cities, but in towns and rural areas in every single state. The national [Women’s March](#) announced more than 650 marches and protests in all 50 states.

Here in Washington, where Women’s March tweeted that more than 20,000 people marched, the group targeted the U.S. Supreme Court, which allowed the Texas law to go forward. The court was scheduled to open its new session two days after.

The Texas law encourages a witchhunt to enforce the ban, which prohibits abortions after six weeks — before most women even know they are pregnant. It promises to reward individuals with a \$10,000 bounty if they successfully sue anyone who helps a woman get an abortion.

At the Supreme Court building, bigoted rightwing groups advocating to take away the rights of women and oppressed-gendered people marshalled less than 100 counter-demonstrators. They were protected by a phalanx of riot police.

In Austin, Texas, women and supporters flooded the grounds of the State Capitol, demanding “Our bodies, our choice, our right!” Thousands more marched in [cities throughout the state](#).

[Los Angeles hosted the largest](#) of California’s many marches for reproductive rights. In New York City, thousands marched across the Brooklyn Bridge and converged with thousands more in lower Manhattan, chanting “Bans off our bodies!”



Washington, D.C. SLL photo: Andre Powell

Who will be most impacted?

Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha and the Socialist Unity Party [distributed thousands of flyers](#) from the West to East coasts, pointing out that “it is Black, Brown and Indigenous people, the poor and youth who rely on reproductive rights centers for basic healthcare, including contraception, general checkups and cancer screenings. Texas law SB8 will shut down care for transgender people who will no longer be able to access needed hormone replacement therapy.”

“Many women will be forced to flee to other states just to obtain the basic right to control one’s own body. But even this will not be possible for many poor, working-class and very young women, who will be forced to risk their lives or health in back-alley abortions.

“The same reactionary forces responsible for this measure, and those who do nothing about it, care little about children and less about all women, regardless of who they love and their gender identity, including transgender women.

“A box full of diapers and a carseat is of little help when families are facing joblessness and homelessness. Where is the fight to stop unemployment benefits from being cut? Where is the moratorium and cancellation of rents, foreclosures and utility shutoffs?

“Where is the fight to stop forced sterilization of poor and oppressed women from Puerto Rico to Mississippi; or the fight to make sure that every person and all children have free healthcare; or for paid maternity leave for working families? What about the lack of affordable, safe daycare that has forced women and all genders out of the workplace?”



New York City

Concern for most oppressed

In Orlando, Fla., these sentiments were echoed by protesters who expressed concerns that poor, Black and Brown women, along with trans women, would be disproportionately impacted.

Over a thousand people took over the streets, reflecting the urgency felt since a bill similar to SB8 was introduced this September in Florida, which would ban abortions and allow lawsuits against doctors who perform the procedure.

The power of protest had an immediate effect.

On Oct. 6, just three days after the historic mobilization, U.S. District Court Judge Robert Pitman [temporarily blocked enforcement of SB8](#), declaring that “This Court will not sanction one more day of this offensive deprivation of such an important right.”

“We’re celebrating today, but our fight isn’t over,” [Women’s March tweeted](#). “Texas will appeal. Which means the law could be put back into place soon. But we know this: hundreds of thousands of us showed up last weekend for abortion justice and we’re not done yet.”



Washington, D.C. SLL photo: Andre Powell

