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VALOR Statement on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Ruling and Coordinated Attacks on Reproductive Freedom

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SACRAMENTO, CA – Late Wednesday night the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled to ban the use of mifepristone after 7 weeks and prohibit the distribution of the medication through the mail. Mifepristone is the first of two medicines used for a medication abortion and is highly effective.

Less than a year after the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, and at a time when we've seen increased attacks on racial equity, transgender rights and reproductive freedom, we are reminded that our work cannot stop here. We cannot become complacent or tired. The rollbacks in fundamental human rights are carefully coordinated attacks on individuals' rights to autonomy and personhood. This ruling, further exerts power and control over millions of people across the country and doing so controls economic, political, and social freedom and mobility.

In response to the ruling VALOR's CEO, Sandra Henriquez, stated, "This decision dismisses the needs of millions of people. It harms survivors of sexual assault, and sends a message that our right to our bodies, our families, our future, and our choice do not matter. We must continue our righteous fight."

When the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* last year, we released an open [letter](#) to the field, urging our movement to do more. We said it then and will say it again now: these attacks are about a dominant culture exerting power and control over anyone able to give birth. They are coordinated attempts to control women and LGBTQ+ people's economic, political, and social freedom and mobility.

The [2016/2017 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence survey](#) highlights 14.9% of women became pregnant as a result of rape, and the [2020 Turnaway Study](#) found individuals who are denied abortions are more likely to stay in contact with an abusive partner. If the most recent rulings on mifepristone access have taught us anything, it's that these cases are part of a larger strategy to restrict the rights and freedoms of women, especially women of color, and it's working.

If the other side is creating a wave, we must create a bigger one. We need to be able to guarantee that regardless of where someone lives in the United States, they have the choice to access reproductive care. We need a federal baseline protection for abortion, contraception, and reproductive care now.

VALOR, End Rape on Campus, and the New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault will be hosting a joint web conference, [Let's Talk About It: Your Role in Advancing Reproductive Justice and Ending Sexual Violence](#), on April 18th at 11am PT. Join us in conversation with students and youth leaders to learn about the work they are doing locally and nationally to restore reproductive rights and prevent and end sexual violence, and identify action steps you can take to continue this collective movement. Use VALOR's [social media graphics](#) to demand a baseline federal protection for access to abortion, contraception, and reproductive care.

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