

## **READ FIRST:**

The following was the final for my Media Relations class in undergrad (May 2023), for which I received an A. This plan is a *hypothetical* strategy and deliverables for the website I created, ICantAffordABaby.org. The op-ed mentioned has been redacted for copyright reasons.

## **ICANTAFFORDABABY.ORG MEDIA RELATIONS PLAN**

### **Overview**

ICantAffordABaby.org (ICAAB) is a resource directory website listing financial and practical aid resource in all 50 states and DC for anything related to: contraceptives, abortion, prenatal care, postpartum/newborns, childcare, pediatric care, domestic violence, sexual violence, legal issues, and mental health support.

ICAAB was made in the wake of Dobbs, when one in three American women lost legal access to abortion care. The issue was clear: women are going to need abortions for various reasons and not be able to access them. From there, I researched every major reason for getting an abortion— whether it be lack of birth control access, an abusive spouse, unaffordable care, postpartum depression risk, etc— and compiled as many resources as I could find to help with these circumstances. Now, ICAAB functions as a thoroughly pro-choice hub for all things I Can't Afford A Baby.

The challenge now is making sure women know about ICAAB, where they can get resources for any problem they might be facing. So far, ICAAB has helped over 1,800 visitors. This plan will use media relations tactics to increase this number.

The nature of ICAAB is to collaborate, not compete. Right now, there is a form on the homepage for organizations to email us to add their resource to the website, and we average about 5 suggestions/additions per week. This has included Recovery Local, Drug Rehab USA, Alcohol Rehab Guide, etc. As competition is not in the spirit of community support, any similar organizations are just collaborations waiting to happen. The website makes it clear that we will uplift any other resource organizations or directories. As for internal collaborators, ICAAB currently has 6 employees and 1 consultant, all women under 30, who work on PR, writing, research, and social media.

The stakeholders/beneficiaries in this project are a) women in abortion-unsafe or under-resourced states and b) organizations that provide resources. The women will be marketed to with the intent to access the website. The organizations will be marketed to with the intent to add their website to ICAAB.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The overall goal will be to accrue at least 5,000 website visitors by May 2024. The specific media relations objectives we are looking to reach are:

- 5 op-eds published
- 7 article mentions
- 6 radio or podcast interviews

The op-eds will be focused on the importance of community resources. The articles and radio/podcast placements will aim to raise awareness about the website. See key messages below.

## **Audience**

The specific audiences we are looking to reach are:

- Women under 40 in Red States
- Reproductive rights activists
- Resource organizations

## **Strategy**

To reach these audiences, we will look into where they consume the most earned media. Millennials (ages X-X) mostly consume podcasts (at 37%), video (at 96%), and online news (Content Science, 2022). Gen Z (ages 12-27) consume online news and short-form videos (DCN, 2021). Men and women have similar earned media preferences (Watson, 2022), so these outlets will be selected based on content (women-oriented) rather than content type. To target red states in particular, local media will be sought after with this campaign. To target reproductive rights activists, we will focus on outlets that have discussed this in the past (Rewire, Ms. Magazine, etc). To reach resource organizations, we will target trade media specific to the type of organization (clinics, mutual aid, baby supplies, etc).

To recap:

Women under 40: Earned media placements in podcasts and online news

Activists: Earned media placements in feminist media outlets

Resource Organizations: Earned media placements in trade publications

## **Key Messages**

1. ICantAffordABaby.org can direct Americans to any and all financial and practical aid resources for fertility, pregnancy, and parenthood.
2. Community support is vital for women’s wellbeing— especially reproductive health— and ICantAffordABaby.org can provide that support.
3. In order to be thoroughly pro-choice, those who care about women’s wellbeing must join forces to help each other, and ICantAffordABaby.org is the central hub for those forces to join.

## **Spokespersons**

Right now, the only confirmed spokesperson is myself, Greta Mauch. I typically use the title Founding Communications Strategist and Web Designer. To avoid a mouthful, I also use the term Creator. Other spokespersons will be sought after during the summer.

## **Tactics**

Tactic 1:

The first tactic we will use in this campaign is to seek out placements in local online news outlets in various abortion-hostile states (APPENDIX I). To do this we will pitch to at least one outlet in the major cities of the 15 “most restrictive” or “very restrictive” states (Guttmacher, 2023) – see below. This will target the “Women Under 40 In Red States” audience.

To effectively gain placements, we will develop fact sheets (APPENDIX A) and pitch letters (APPENDIX C) about ICAAB and recent abortion news, specifically about how each state.

City Placements:

Houston, TX  
Oklahoma City, OK  
Kansas City, MO  
Little Rock, AR  
New Orleans, LA  
Jackson, MS  
Huntsville, AL  
Memphis, TN  
Lexington, KY  
Charleston, WV  
Pierre, SD  
Boise, ID  
Phoenix, AZ  
Atlanta, GA  
Jacksonville, FL

Tactic 2:

The second tactic will be to seek speaking engagements on at least one local radio station in the major cities of the 15 “most restrictive” or “very restrictive” states (Guttmacher, 2023) – see above. This will target Women Under 40 In Red States. To do this, we will develop a pitch list and angle (APPENDIX I) and message map (APPENDIX E).

### Tactic 3:

The third tactic will be to pitch op-eds to various online outlets, either local red-state ones or reproductive-rights-focused ones (APPENDIX I). These op-eds will be focused on the key messages above. To complete this tactic, we will write op-eds (APPENDIX H) using internal fact sheets/angles (APPENDIX G), specifically supporting the following topics. This will reach both Women Under 40 In Red States and Reproductive Rights Activists

#### Topic Examples:

“We need to financially support mothers / Make motherhood accessible”

“[X red state’s government] neglects parental support policies”

“Reproductive rights activists need to focus on parental support too”

“Adoption is not the answer to abortion bans”

“All charities/support organizations need to band together”

### Tactic 4:

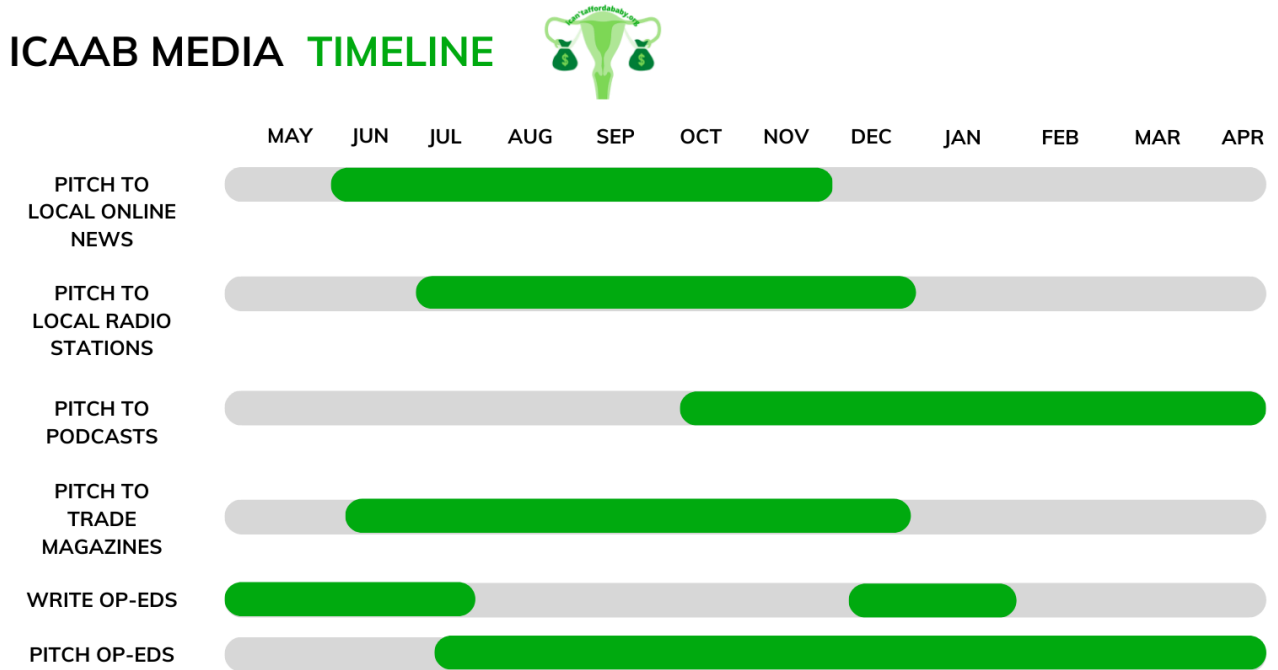
The fourth tactic will be to seek speaking engagements on podcasts, specifically ones about women’s rights, health, and reproduction. This would target all three audiences. To do this, we would develop a podcast-specific pitch list (APPENDIX Z) and message map to be used during the recordings (APPENDIX F).

### Tactic 5:

The fourth tactic will be to seek placements in trade magazines about women’s nonprofits or other parental-support charities. This will target the Resource Organizations. To do this, we

will need to develop a specific pitch list (APPENDIX I) and news release (APPENDIX B) about ICAAB’s development and purpose.

### Timeline



### Budget:

ICAAB currently does not have a budget/source of income, so everything done will need to be free. Using media relations tactics is a perfect way to do this, as it is considered unethical to pay for placements other than advertising.

### Evaluation:

To evaluate the success of this campaign, we will note the following metrics:

- Number of online news placements (Goal: 7 by May 2024)
- Number of podcast speaking engagements (Goal: 3 by May 2024)
- Number of radio speaking engagements (Goal: 3 by May 2024)
- Number of op-eds published (Goal: 5 by May 2024)
- Website visits (Goal: 5,000 by May 2024).
- Social media followers (Goal: Cumulative 700 by May 2024)
- Resource pitch emails (Goal: 30 by May 2024).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, ICAAB's team will use the above media relations tactics to gain awareness among women, activists, and nonprofit leadership in order to increase website traffic.

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## APPENDIX A - Fact Sheet

### ICANTAFFORDABABY.ORG

#### FACT SHEET

#### Contact:

Greta Mauch, Founding Communications Strategist

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#### About Us

- ICantAffordABaby.org offers 1,755 total resources to provide Americans in all 50 states and DC practical and financial support in accessing: contraceptives (138 resources), abortion (54), prenatal care (146), postpartum/newborn support (224) and supplies (171), childcare (218), pediatric care (261), domestic and sexual violence (including legal issues) (464), and mental health (221).
- Over 1,800 individuals have accessed support through ICantAffordABaby.org since it was published on August 13, 2022.
- ICantAffordABaby.org was created in the wake of the Dobbs leak by then-college-student Greta Mauch. Greta Mauch recently earned her BA in Public Relations and Strategic Communication with a concentration in Political Communication and a minor in Sociology. She now works as the Founding Communications Strategist and Web Designer for ICantAffordABaby.org, where she manages a group of 7 volunteers working on outreach, social media, and research efforts.

#### How We Help

- 73% of abortions are due to the financial inability to parent a child or carry a pregnancy to term (Guttmacher).
- At the time of the Dobbs decision being released, one in three women of childbearing age lived in abortion-restrictive states ([Washington Post](#)). Now, over 26 states have restricted abortion access ([Guttmacher](#)).

- Maternal mortality increases by 24% overall with US abortion bans, and up to 39% in Black women ([University of Colorado](#)).
- -more-
- Abortion-restrictive states have a 62% higher maternal mortality rate than abortion-safe states ([Commonwealth Fund](#)).
- Up to 53% of women of childbearing age live in “contraceptive deserts,” with higher rates in states with abortion restrictions ([Duke University](#)).

### **State-Specific Facts: Florida**

- Florida recently passed a 6-week abortion ban. This will overturn the previous 15-week abortion ban.
- 91.1% of abortions are performed before 13 weeks of pregnancy, and only 37.6% are performed before 6 weeks ([CDC](#)).
- It is estimated that Florida will see a 29% increase in maternal deaths with its abortion ban ([University of Colorado](#)).
- There are over 3.9 million women of childbearing age living in Florida. 1 in 7 of them live in poverty ([March of Dimes](#)).
- Women in Florida earn \$10,000 less than Florida men on average ([US Census](#)).
- ICantAffordABaby.org has 278 resources available for Floridians, including:
  - 24 for contraceptives
  - 36 for abortion
  - 30 for prenatal care
  - 24 for postpartum/newborn support
  - 32 for postpartum/newborn supplies
  - 14 for childcare
  - 37 for pediatric care
  - 37 for domestic violence, sexual violence, and legal issues
  - 44 for mental health

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## APPENDIX B - News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **ICantAffordABaby.org Compiles All Nonprofits in America for Women, Mothers, and Babies**

Washington, DC – August 13, 2023 – Exactly one year ago, on August 13, 2022, the resource directory website ICantAffordABaby.org was published, compiling every financial and practical aid resource in all 50 states and DC for anything related to: contraceptives, abortion, prenatal care, newborn support and supplies, childcare, pediatric care, domestic and sexual violence, legal issues, and mental health.

ICantAffordABaby.org was created by then-college student Greta Mauch, who started on the research immediately after the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* draft was leaked on May 2, 2022. For three months, she researched nonstop every nonprofit, clinic, and other supportive organizations. Today, ICantAffordABaby.org lists 1,755 total resources (and counting), including 138 for contraceptives, 54 for abortion, 146 for prenatal care, 395 for postpartum/newborn support and supplies, 218 for childcare, 261 for pediatric care, 221 for mental health, and 464 for domestic violence, sexual violence, and legal issues.

Now, the creators of ICantAffordABaby.org are looking for resource organizations– including nonprofits, support groups, and organizations with low-income support programs– to submit their websites to be featured on ICantAffordABaby.org. These submissions can be made on the homepage or by emailing [icantaffordababy@gmail.com](mailto:icantaffordababy@gmail.com).

“In order to thoroughly address reproductive injustice in this country, we must support all reproductive paths. I created ICantAffordABaby.org because I know there are countless people, communities, and organizations already providing that support to women, and I wanted to make sure their resources are as easily accessible as possible,” said Greta Mauch, who graduated in May with a BA in Public Relations and Strategic Communication with a concentration in Political Communication and a minor in Sociology. “Especially in a post-Roe America, motherhood must be made affordable and accessible, both through government programs and community support.”

For more information, or to submit an organization you admire, visit [www.ICantAffordABaby.org](http://www.ICantAffordABaby.org). The more resources submitted, the more thoroughly we can address reproductive injustice.

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Founding Communications Strategist, Web Designer  
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## **APPENDIX C - Local News Pitch Letter**

Hi [NAME],

I hope you're doing well. I'm writing to suggest a new story for [OUTLET]. As you know, Florida recently passed a six-week abortion ban. As such, the 3.9 million Floridian women of childbearing age will now lose access to abortion after six weeks of pregnancy, after which 62.4% of abortions occur. Worse, though, is that one in seven Floridian women of childbearing age live in poverty, meaning a significant amount of children will now be born into poverty because their mothers could not access abortion in Florida or afford it out-of-state.

Because of this upcoming crisis, I would like to let you know about the resource ICantAffordABaby.org. This website offers 278 resources in Florida to provide practical and financial support in accessing: contraceptives, abortion, prenatal care, postpartum/newborn support and supplies, childcare, pediatric care, domestic and sexual violence, legal issues, and mental health. I am attaching a fact sheet with the specific numbers for how many Floridian resources it offers in each category.

This website was developed last year after Roe was overturned. It was created by St. Petersburg, FL native, Greta Mauch, a 21 year old then-college student getting her degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communication with a concentration in Political Communication and a minor in Sociology. I am happy to put you in touch with Greta for an interview about this project and how it can help Floridians with the upcoming abortion ban.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this. I hope to hear from you soon,  
[NAME]



## APPENDIX D - Op-Ed Pitch Letter

Hi X,

My name is Greta Mauch; I am a writer and reproductive rights activist. I recently read X RELEVANT ARTICLE, and loved the discussion it offered. One thing I think is missing from conversations on reproductive rights though is the financial repercussions that can occur from having a baby and the parental pay gap.

I'm writing to you to pitch an opinion piece I wrote about the financial impacts on women who give birth only because their states have abortion bans. In my research, I have found several ways abortion bans harm the economic health of women. I will argue that the pro-choice movement needs to focus on affordable motherhood and abortion access. Moreover, my op-ed column will include specific ways we can support mothers in our community and policies.

**MAKE MOTHERHOOD AFFORDABLE:** Being denied an abortion and forced into motherhood lowers a woman's credit score, increases her debt, increases her risk of bankruptcy and eviction, and increases her rate of poverty for at least four years. The pro-choice movement has done a phenomenal job of expanding abortion access to abortion-restrictive states. It is also our job, though, to embody the sentiment of choice. We need to make motherhood affordable and accessible. We need free healthcare for prenatal care, birth, and pediatric care to be the law. We must create a village for mothers in our community when they can't afford childcare and donate to mothers who can't afford newborn supplies. Making motherhood accessible is critical.

I've completed the entire 628-word article. It is ready for publication if you have an interest in publishing it.

I provide expertise on this topic as I am the Founding Communications Strategist and Web Designer for ICantAffordABaby.org, a resource directory website listing every financial and practical aid resource in the U.S. for fertility, pregnancy, and parenthood (from contraception and abortion to prenatal care and childcare to domestic and sexual violence support). I am also a writer and communications strategist focusing on community building and equal opportunities.

[X ABOUT RELEVANT PIECE]. [X ABOUT WHY THEY ARE A GOOD OUTLET].

Here is a link to a recent op-ed I wrote about disability integration in protesting.

Thank you for considering my pitch.

**APPENDIX E - Local Radio Message Map Example: Florida**

Target Audience:	Women Under 40 in FL		
Overarching message:	ICAAB can help women in FL access practical and financial support for fertility, pregnancy, and parenthood.		
Key message 1: The 6-week abortion ban will make it hard but not impossible to access abortion in Florida.	Supporting Fact 1a: Florida recently passed a 6-week abortion ban. This will overturn the previous 15-week abortion ban and <b>restrict 62.4% of abortions for 3.9 million women of childbearing age living in Florida, 1 in 7 of whom live in poverty</b> and already struggle accessing abortion.	Supporting Fact 1b: ICAAB can connect Florida women to <b>30 financial and practical resources</b> for accessing an abortion at <a href="http://icantaffordababy.org/financial-help">icantaffordababy.org/financial-help</a> , <a href="http://icantaffordababy.org/logistical-help">/logistical-help</a> , or <a href="http://icantaffordababy.org/legal-help">/legal-help</a> .	Supporting Fact 1c: <b>Florida has 11 vetted abortion funds</b> who will continue helping Floridians access the abortion care they need. They can be found at <a href="http://AbortionFunds.org">AbortionFunds.org</a> .
Key message 2: Women in Florida have affordable contraceptive access to protect them against unwanted pregnancies.	Supporting Fact 2a: <b>Florida has 157 Title X clinics</b> , which offer family planning services.	Supporting Fact 2b: ICAAB can connect Florida women to <b>25 financial and practical resources</b> for accessing an affordable birth control and contraceptives at <a href="http://icantaffordababy.org/contraceptives">icantaffordababy.org/contraceptives</a> or <a href="http://icantaffordababy.org/emergency-contraceptives">/emergency-contraceptives</a> .	Supporting Fact 2c: A Washington University study found that <b>access to affordable contraceptives reduces abortion rates up to 78%</b> . Getting on birth control now can help protect you from the effects of abortion bans.

<p>Key message 3: If you do become pregnant and can't get an abortion, there are resources to help you parent.</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 3a: <b>73% of abortions occur because the person or family cannot afford a child or to carry the pregnancy to term.</b> We as a country and state need to support through all stages of parenthood, and there are plenty of resources that do that.</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 3b: <b>ICAAB can connect you to over 119 resources</b> for affordable prenatal care, postpartum care, newborn supplies, childcare, and pediatric care.</p>	<p>Supporting Fact 3c: Your community will support you in parenthood. Though FL has less-than-optimal maternity care programs, <b>the individuals in your community can help you.</b></p>
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**APPENDIX F- Podcast message map example**

Target Audience:	Reproductive Rights Activists		
Overarching Message:	We must be thoroughly pro-choice to actually support women, which is why I created ICAAB.		
Key message 1: Motherhood accessibility is just as important as abortion accessibility.	Supporting fact 1a: <b>Women’s lifetime earnings decrease by nearly \$40,000</b> when denied an abortion and their <b>debt increases by 78%</b> . Any attempt at reproductive justice must make motherhood financially accessible.	Supporting fact 1b: <b>Abortions can cost anywhere from \$100-2000</b> . Affordability is a key component of actual bodily autonomy.	Supporting fact 1c: <b>ICAAB has 1,755 total resources</b> , which help Americans access financial support for anything, from contraceptives and abortions to prenatal care and childcare. All aspects of reproduction must be made affordable and have adequate support.
Key message 2: Reproductive rights activists must look into the reasons people get abortions to actually address the problem.	Supporting fact 2a: <b>73% of abortions are motivated by financial constraints</b> . We need to make parenthood more affordable.	Supporting fact 2b: <b>Between 6-22% of abortion patients have experienced intimate partner violence</b> . Domestic violence is a major reason for abortion, as having a baby with an abuser may make you tied together forever. Reproductive justice must include DV support, <b>which can be accessed at</b>	Supporting fact 3c: <b>Over 30% of new moms experience postpartum depression</b> . If that is a fear of yours, that may motivate you to get an abortion. Reproductive justice must include mental health resources, which can be <b>accessed at <a href="http://icantafforababy.org/mental-health">icantafforababy.org/mental-health</a></b>

		<b>icantaffordababy.org/violence-help.</b>	
<p>Key message 3: To achieve reproductive justice, we need to create thoroughly supportive local communities.</p>	<p>Supporting fact 3a: Abortion funds are vitally important resources that help individuals on a local-level access abortion. In 2020, <b>abortion funds helped over 45,000 patients pay for their abortions.</b> These can be found on <a href="http://icantaffordababy.org/financial-help">icantaffordababy.org/financial-help</a> or <a href="http://icantaffordababy.org/logistical-help">/logistical-help</a> or <a href="http://abortionfunds.org">abortionfunds.org</a>.</p>	<p>Supporting fact 3b: <b>ICAAB also lists mutual aid groups,</b> where individuals support each other laterally rather than with a charity model. This creates a sense of secure community and supports all reproductive paths.</p>	<p>Supporting fact 3c: A great resource on ICAAB is Saving Our Sisters Adoption, which <b>gives women the resources they need to keep their baby rather than place them for adoption</b> because they can't afford them.</p>

## APPENDIX G - Internal Fact Sheet

### Op-Ed Fact Sheet (Internal)

#### Abortion, Motherhood, and Finances

- 73% of abortions are for financial reasons ([Guttmacher Institute](#))
- Legal abortion access since 1973 is directly responsible for women's increased income and education ([Guttmacher](#))
- Motherhood lowers a woman's credit score, increases her debt, increases her risk of bankruptcy and eviction, and increases her rate of poverty for at least four years ([University of California San Francisco](#))
- Women's lifetime earnings decrease by nearly \$40,000 when denied an abortion ([CEDE](#))
- Motherhood increases debt by 78% ([The National Bureau of Economic Research](#))
- Single mothers have a poverty rate of 26% ([Duke University](#))
- Single mothers' employment rate drops 9% after giving birth ([Duke University](#))
- White mothers earn 11% less than their childless counterparts, and mothers of color earn 15% less ([Journal of Marriage and Family](#).)
- Abortions cost up to \$2000 ([Planned Parenthood](#))
- Abortion Funds paid for 45,000 abortions in 2020 ([NPR](#))

#### Abortion Stats

- 33 states are now legally restricting abortion (Guttmacher)
- 6% and 22% of abortion patients have experienced intimate partner violence ([BMC Med](#))
- 91.1% of abortions are performed before 13 weeks of pregnancy ([CDC](#)).
- Only 37.6% of abortions are performed before 6 weeks ([CDC](#)).
- At the time of the Dobbs decision being released, one in three women of childbearing age lived in abortion-restrictive states ([Washington Post](#)).
- Maternal mortality increases by 24% overall with US abortion bans, and up to 39% in Black women ([University of Colorado](#)).
- Abortion-restrictive states have a 62% higher maternal mortality rate than abortion-safe states ([Commonwealth Fund](#)).
- Up to 53% of women of childbearing age live in "contraceptive deserts," with higher rates in states with abortion restrictions ([Duke University](#)).

#### Misc

- Birth control access cuts abortion rates by 62 to 78 percent ([Washington University](#))
- Only 9% percent of those denied an abortion chose to give their baby up for adoption ([Women's Health Issues](#))
- 30% of mothers have postpartum depression ([PPD](#))

*Note: this fact sheet is incomplete and will continue to be built*

## **APPENDIX H - Op-Ed**

*[redacted]*

## **APPENDIX I - Pitch List**

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1H\\_nkNnIYyNm2JiUXvGD8ntx2Cpa6kqkK0WykRD5HZSg/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1H_nkNnIYyNm2JiUXvGD8ntx2Cpa6kqkK0WykRD5HZSg/edit?usp=sharing)