

Waco Tribune-Herald



SUNNY HOT 101 • 78 FORECAST, A2

SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2022

wacotrib.com

IN GOD WE TRUST



ROD AYDELOTTE, TRIBUNE-HERALD

Pro-Life Waco held a celebration rally Friday in front of the Planned Parenthood clinic off Highway 6, after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* and the constitutional right to abortion.

Local abortion foes elated by *Roe's* end

Pro-Life Waco reacts quickly with celebration

ERIANNE LEWIS
elewis@wacotrib.com

A Pro-Life Waco rally Friday kicked off a weekend of local celebrations planned in response to the Supreme Court's decision to overturn the landmark 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade*.

A large group, many donning anti-abortion paraphernalia, gathered near the gate in front

of Waco's Planned Parenthood-Mary Ruth Duncan Health Center, 700 W. Highway 6. The rally opened with a prayer followed by much rejoicing about Friday's ruling, which holds there is no longer a constitutional right to abortion, likely paving the way for abortion bans in about half the states.

Many guest speakers approached the small stage to disclose personal experiences with abortion and express their joy at the realization of their work being presented in the court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson*.

Texas State Rep. Charles "Doc" Anderson opened his speech by proclaiming thankfulness for this monumental day.

"It's 102 degrees in Waco. Who

would have ever thought today would be the day that *Roe* would burn to the ground," Anderson said. "*Roe* right from the get-go should never have been established."

Pro-Life Waco Director John Pisciotta said he was overcome with joy after reading the Su-

OVER

Waco

From A1

an abortion. Abortion is essential healthcare."

Planned Parenthood of Greater Texas spokesperson Autumn Keiser said abortion services have been temporarily halted "while we consider the implications of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling."

However, Keiser said the ruling will not affect the other services offered at Planned Parenthood clinics.

"The U.S. Supreme Court rul-

ing has no effect on reproductive and sexual healthcare such as birth control, breast and cervical cancer screening, STI testing and treatment, annual exams and other essential, preventive care," Keiser said. "The Waco Health Center doors are open and will remain open to provide the trusted healthcare Texas has turned to for more than 85 years."

The court's 6-3 decision, which was leaked in a mostly complete form in May, gives the states the right to determine abortion laws, and almost half are expected to implement some form of abortion

ban.

It is anticipated Texas' abortion ban, which begins at the moment of fertilization, will be put into place roughly 30 days after the Supreme Court's decision is finalized. Texas offers few exemptions for the ban, limited to "when the patient's life is in danger or if they are at risk of substantial impairment of a major bodily function," according to The Texas Tribune.

Abortion rights opponents in Waco reacted quickly when news of the decision broke Friday.

Volunteer Jennifer Digiacomo, with 40 days for Life, a grassroots

organization formed to end abortion, said she immediately thanked God after hearing the decision. She believes what's next is raise more awareness about the available opportunities for women during pregnancies, Digiacomo said.

"There are more pregnancy care centers than there are abortions in the country," she said. "Getting that information out (is important) and more so that there is more help there than the public has been led to believe. We do support women, during and after their pregnancies."

David Arnett, pastor at Bible Way Church, ended the rally with final points and a prayer. Arnett thanked the crowd for their constant participation in the anti-abortion movement.

"Your well doing has made a difference," Arnett said. "Your well doing has exposed the devil and ignorance of foolish and ungodly men and women in this place. Look what the result is, it's not just here in Waco, and it's all over the United States. Isn't that wonderful, it's a group of people that are determined to fight evil wherever they come across it."