

Examining the relationship of reproductive health and economics

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Access to reproductive health care—and abortion in particular—is an issue that resonates with voters' deeply held personal beliefs and reflects their underlying moral, philosophical, and religious views. But is it also

an economic issue?

Since the 2022 Dobbs decision, 21 states have banned or severely restricted access to [abortion](#). In Texas, a state where abortion is illegal except for very early in pregnancy, companies have claimed these policies are hurting their ability to attract and retain workers.

Austin-based tech company Bumble, for example, estimated that about one-third of its Texas-based workforce has left the state in response to the new restrictions. Some companies, like Salesforce, are paying to relocate workers out of states with abortion bans, and a variety of scientific and professional organizations have stated they will no longer hold conferences or events in these states, potentially reducing tourism revenue.

But to date, these types of actions have been relatively modest and small-scale. In the [February Financial Times-Michigan Ross poll](#), only 26% of [voters](#) living in states with new abortion restrictions felt that the laws hurt the economy, with the majority (51%) not perceiving any difference in the [economic situation](#) as a result of the law changes.

At the same time, 38% of those living in states with new restrictions said they were more concerned about abortion bans than a politician's handling of the economy when it came to their vote. Abortion clearly remains an animating and controversial issue and, for many voters, one that is important even if it does not translate into observable macroeconomic changes.

We know from a variety of economic studies that restricting access to [reproductive health care](#) directly hurts the economic or financial situation of those who are denied wanted care, increases teen pregnancy rates, and reduces [educational attainment](#) among young women.

But, it remains to be seen whether these effects translate to impacts on the aggregate economy that voters notice and attribute to restrictions. And since these direct effects could be long-term in nature, any negative economic impacts of abortion bans might not be felt in time to be a factor that moves the needle in November.

Provided by University of Michigan

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