



Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona

PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 30, 2016

CONTACT: Tayler Tucker

media@ppaz.org

(602) 263-4225

FDA Approves New Label for Medication Abortion: Governor Ducey MUST Veto Arizona Medication Abortion Bill

This bill will require Arizona physicians administer medication abortion according to an outdated 16 year old standard, contrary to the health and safety of women

PHOENIX, AZ. Today, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a new label for Mifeprex (mifepristone), one of the medicines used in a medication abortion. The new label updates the protocol for medication abortion so it reflects the most common evidence-based protocols recommended by Planned Parenthood, the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Society for Family Planning. The FDA's approval of the new label is based on substantial evidence demonstrating that medication abortion is safe for virtually all women.

“First and foremost, this is another affirmation from the FDA that medication abortion is a safe and effective option to end an early pregnancy. Studies show medication abortion has a 99 percent safety record, and that medication abortion is up to 97 percent effective in ending an early pregnancy,” said William Richardson, Planned Parenthood Arizona Medical Director.

In light of this new label, Planned Parenthood Advocates Arizona urges Governor Doug Ducey to veto **SB 1324: Abortion Clinics; Medication Abortions.**

SB1324 requires physicians to use an outdated year 2000 protocol for the administration of medication abortion which is contrary to the aim of assuring health and safety for women. No mainstream healthcare experts or organizations supports SB1324.

Women in the United States have been safely and legally using medication abortion for over a decade, with approximately one in four women who make the decision to end a pregnancy choosing this method if they're eligible — in Arizona, the number is closer to half.

“Politicians supporting SB 1324 want Arizonans to believe that this bill is about protecting women,” said Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona President, Bryan Howard. “However, medical professionals know that locking in place a medical standard which is now 16 years old is disastrous for Arizona women. We are pleased that the FDA has acted to support evidence-based medicine, and urge the governor to take heed from their action”

Dr. Julie Kwatra, legislative chair of the Arizona chapter of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) added “The impacts of tying the administration of medication abortion to an outdated FDA protocol rather than today’s evidence-based standards include requiring women to return to their doctor for the second medication involved in medication abortion rather than taking the second medication at home, and tripling the dose of the 1st medication (Mifeprex) from 200 mg to 600 mg. That’s not the modern standard of care, and simply put, is bad medicine”

“The Governor must veto this bill, which should have never made it to his desk.” said Bryan Howard. “Politicians, spurred on by extreme social conservative special interest groups, are well aware of the medical community’s opposition to these restrictions. This is yet another example of the legislature overriding physicians’ training and expertise purely in order to lessen and ultimately eliminate access to abortion. Arizona citizens are tired of needless legislation pushed by interest groups with an extreme social agenda. Politicians must stop interfering in women’s health care and private medical decisions.”

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona will be spotlighting the growing interference of politicians in women’s health in Arizona at major luncheons in Phoenix and Tucson on April 8 and 15 respectively. For more information visit: <http://advocatesaz.org/upcoming-events/>

Background

In October 2015, a Maricopa Superior Court judge struck down a 2012 Arizona law that attempted to restrict doctors by limiting their ability to accurately prescribe medications for abortion patients. Abortion providers have challenged the restrictive law in state and federal courts; succeeding at all levels.

SB1324 will

- Force doctors to use an outdated, 16-year old FDA protocol.
- Force patients to take the second dose of medication at the doctor’s office rather than at home
- Require abortion medications be prescribed according to the FDA-label that is frozen in time: December 31, 2015

Mifepristone, also known as medication abortion or “the abortion pill” (formerly known as RU-486), is an antiprogesterone drug that blocks receptors of progesterone, a key hormone in the establishment and maintenance of pregnancy. Used in combination with a prostaglandin such as misoprostol, mifepristone induces abortion when administered in early pregnancy, providing women with an alternative to aspiration (suction or surgical) abortion. A medication abortion is different than emergency contraception, or “the morning after pill,” which prevents a pregnancy from occurring

An overwhelming majority of women who choose mifepristone for medication abortion are satisfied with the method. One study found that 97 percent of women would recommend the method to a friend.

Additionally, 91 percent of the women reported that they would choose the mifepristone regimen again if they had to have another abortion.

Until today, the regimen outlined on mifepristone's final printing label approved by the FDA was based on clinical trials completed in the mid-1990s. Numerous subsequent studies have demonstrated the safety and effectiveness of a regimen using a lower dosage of mifepristone that can also be used two weeks later in pregnancy, up to 70 days since a woman's last menstrual period. This new regimen has been recognized by the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists as "superior" to the regimen on the previous FDA-approved label

*Planned Parenthood 's advocacy and political arm in Arizona, **Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona (PPAA)**, is the state's largest nonpartisan advocacy organization dedicated to protecting access to women's health care. PPAA is fighting for every woman's freedom and right to make reproductive choices, enjoy sexual health and well being, and build healthy, strong families.*

Advocatesaz.org