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National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health NPWH and ACNM Applaud Landmark Court Decision Upholding Montana Abortion Access for Advanced Practice Nurses and Midwives

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On May 12, 2023, the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH) and the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) celebrated a groundbreaking court decision that preserves safe and qualified access to medication abortion care in Montana. The ruling, handed down by the Montana Supreme Court, recognizes the critical role of advanced practice nurses and midwives in providing safe and essential reproductive healthcare services. NPWH and ACNM filed an [Amicus Brief in the case earlier this month](#).

The court's decision rejected a law that would have made it a felony for providers other than physicians and physician assistance to perform medication abortion. The ruling affirms that qualified and competent advanced practice nurses and midwives have the legal authority to provide abortion care within their scope of practice, and the law in question would have violated a patient's fundamental right to privacy seek care with a qualified provider of their choosing.

"This landmark ruling acknowledges the valuable contributions of women's health nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, and all advanced practice nurse practitioners," said Heather L. Maurer, MA, CAE, NPWH CEO. "Not only are APRNs qualified to provide safe and effective abortion care, they can, and routinely do, provide healthcare services that are more complex than abortion. With women's and gender-related care restricted and banned across the country, APRNs are critical to keeping our communities safe and healthy."

Michelle L. Munroe, DNP, CNM, FACNM, FAAN, Interim Chief Executive Officer for ACNM, expressed her appreciation for the court's decision, stating, "We are pleased with the Montana Supreme Court's decision to affirm the right of patients to choose advanced practice clinicians, including midwives, to provide safe and effective abortion care. This decision acknowledges the valuable contributions of women's health nurse practitioners and certified nurse-midwives in ensuring equitable access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare services."



NPWH and ACNM remain committed to advocating for policies that advance healthcare equity, protect reproductive rights, and recognize the invaluable contributions of advanced practice nurses and midwives.

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NPWH is the professional community for Women's Health Nurse Practitioners and other advanced practice registered nurses who provide women's and gender-related healthcare. We set a standard of excellence by generating, translating, and promoting the latest research and evidence-based clinical guidance, providing high-quality continuing education, and advocating for patients, providers, and the WHNP profession.

Our mission includes protecting and promoting a woman and all individuals' rights to make their own choices regarding their health and well-being within the context of their lived experience and their personal, religious, cultural, and family beliefs.

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