

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Niambé Tomlinson (National Urban League) (202) 629-5750
| ntomlinson@nul.org

Gabby Richards (Planned Parenthood Action Fund) 202-309-3619 | gabby.richards@ppfa.org

NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS LEADERS MEET WITH VICE PRESIDENT HARRIS TO STRESS THE URGENCY TO PROTECT REPRODUCTIVE AND VOTING RIGHTS

WASHINGTON, DC (September 12, 2022) – The nation’s top civil rights leaders, reproductive rights and justice organizations met with Vice President Kamala Harris today to discuss the harmful impact of the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* and the ongoing threat to our democracy.

This meeting stems from a [letter](#) the organizations sent to President Biden in July urging his administration to prioritize the protection of women’s health and reproductive rights after the Supreme Court made the overwhelming decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. For nearly 50 years, women have had the freedom to choose what to do with their own bodies. The impact of the rollback on reproductive health access undermined decades of progress for gender equity and reproductive freedom, one that disproportionately impacts Black women, other women of color, and vulnerable women, and will reverberate for generations.

Similarly, as the deteriorating crisis of democracy continues to overtake the country, the need for federal legislative intervention could not be more urgent. With the anti-democracy wave of radical state and federal lawmakers openly coordinating with violent extremists on a campaign of suppression intimidation underway, they are dangerously close to dismantling American democracy and establishing autocratic rule. These cynical efforts to preserve political power at all costs are a threat to our democracy and need to be challenged directly and undeniably.

“As leaders of several of the top civil rights, national reproductive rights, health, and justice organizations, we are incredibly grateful to Vice President Harris for meeting with us to discuss the dire situation unfolding across the country as abortion access hangs in the balance,” **the coalition shared following Monday’s meeting.**

*“Abortion access is an economic and racial justice issue. The Supreme Court’s disastrous decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* stripped women of the federal constitutional right to control their own bodies. The denial of that access cannot be separated from other social justice issues – voter disenfranchisement, policing abuse, criminal injustice, poverty, economic inequity, housing inequity, LGBTQ+ rights, the immigration crisis, food insecurity, medical bias, environmental injustice etc. – that disproportionately harm the communities we serve. Sixteen states so far have implemented abortion bans — and more will follow.*

“Together, we are prepared for the long fight that lies ahead to safeguard reproductive rights, voting rights, and other freedoms – and we are grateful to the Biden-Harris administration for their continued work to protect these essential rights. We know that the survival and thriving of Black people and the other communities we serve depend on our success, and we need the continued leadership of the Biden-Harris administration to be successful.”

The meeting was attended by the following leaders from national civil rights, reproductive rights, and justice organizations:

Marc H. Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League

Alexis McGill Johnson, President and CEO, Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Nancy Northup, President and CEO, Center for Reproductive Rights

Marcela Howell, President and CEO, In Our Own Voice: National Black Women’s Reproductive Justice Agenda

Damon Hewitt, President and Executive Director, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights for Under Law

Jesselyn McCurdy, Executive Vice President for Government Affairs, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

Janai S. Nelson, President and Director-Counsel, Legal Defense Fund (LDF)

Derrick Johnson, President and CEO, NAACP

Mini Timmaraju, President, NARAL Pro-Choice America

Rev. Al Sharpton, President and Founder, National Action Network

Imani Rupert-Gordon, Executive Director, National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)

Melanie L. Campbell, President and CEO, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, National Convener, Black Women’s Roundtable

Dr. Thelma T. Daley, National President/Chair, National Council for Negro Women, Inc.

Jocelyn Frye, President, National Partnership for Women & Families

Shalondan Hollingshed, President, National Urban League Young Professionals

Fatima Goss Graves, President, National Women’s Law Center

Karen Finney, Co-Convener, Power Rising

Monica Simpson, Executive Director, SisterSong

Kimberly Inez McGuire, Executive Director, URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity