

## Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of Massachusetts Moves Beyond Roe

**The Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of Massachusetts (PPAF) was ready to act when the U.S. Supreme Court issued its devastating decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* last June. As part of the Beyond Roe Coalition ([massbeyondroe.com](http://massbeyondroe.com)), PPAF, with partners Reproductive Equity Now and the ACLU of Massachusetts, is advancing new legislation, budget investments, and regulatory solutions that will ensure true reproductive freedom in the Commonwealth.**

The Beyond Roe Coalition has reactivated the broad network of social justice groups, health advocacy organizations, and grassroots activists that in 2020 helped secure passage of the ROE Act - state legislation which protects the right to abortion in Massachusetts and removed barriers to accessing abortion care for some young people. Now PPAF is working with its coalition partners to make equitable access a reality for all Bay State residents regardless of race, ethnicity, income, zip code, gender identity, age, immigration status, ability, sexual orientation, or religion. Dr. Nate Horwitz-Willis, executive director of PPAF, says: "Massachusetts has always been a bastion of innovation and influence in public health, and right now we have the opportunity and the obligation to show what is possible for reproductive health equity. We can be a model for other states to follow. I'm



From left to right: Rebecca Hart Holder from Reproductive Equity Now, U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), PPAF President Dr. Jennifer Childs-Roshak, U.S. Senator Ed Markey (D-MA), and Matthew Segal from the ACLU of Massachusetts at a Beyond Roe Coalition meeting in June.

thrilled that just one month after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe*, we have already taken major steps to protect and expand abortion access in Massachusetts."

The 21-point Massachusetts Beyond Roe agenda is specific and bold. In July, Governor Charlie Baker signed a comprehensive abortion access bill into law, adopting 12 of the Coalition's recommendations, including:

**Issuing protections for reproductive health care and gender-affirming care providers** by strengthening privacy laws and shielding them from hostile investigations and litigation from states with abortion bans;

**Requiring insurance to cover abortion and abortion-related care**, with provisions for coverage without cost-sharing for low-income individuals;

**Making medication abortion available at Massachusetts public college and university campus health centers** and no-cost insurance coverage possible for prescription and over-the-counter emergency contraception; and

**Clarifying a provision of the ROE Act** so that pregnant people are not forced to leave Massachusetts for abortion care later in pregnancy.

Additionally, the FY23 state budget includes a first-ever investment of \$2 million for reproductive health facilities and abortion funds to help more people access services and cover costs for abortion care in Massachusetts. The Beyond Roe Coalition is already having a major impact and is focused on advancing its entire agenda.

# ceo's corner

Charlie Abrahams



## Dear Friends,

As you may know, I recently announced that after seven years leading Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM) and the Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of Massachusetts (PPAF), I've decided to step down at the end of the year.

While there's never a perfect time for a CEO transition, I'm confident as ever in our mission, the strong foundation we've built, and the ongoing work of PPLM.

We couldn't do this work without your help. Your support helped us prepare for this post-Roe world. Your generosity and ferocity make it possible for PPLM and PPAF to fight back. Thank you.

As you will read in this *Advocate*, PPAF is banding together with coalition partners to make bold improvements to abortion access (page 1). PPLM's Community Outreach team is working across the state to ensure patients have access to the care and information they

need (page 3). And you'll read one provider's perspective on delivering care in one of our health centers when the post-Roe world began (page 2).

The work we do here is so much bigger than any one person—it's about the mission. I hope that Planned Parenthood can continue to count on your support.

I'm so proud of the work we've done together over these past seven years. I will leave Planned Parenthood with countless memories of all of those we've helped along the way in my heart, and with great hope for all of those we will help in the future.

Thank you for standing with us.

In solidarity,

Jennifer Childs-Roshak, MD  
President and Chief Executive Officer

## advocate perspectives: Providing Abortion Care in a Post-Roe World (by a PPLM abortion provider)

It was just another Friday. I was providing abortion care at a Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts (PPLM) health center when I got a call informing me the U.S. Supreme Court had overturned *Roe v. Wade*. I knew this was a possibility, but the reality felt like a gut punch! In the space of a few minutes, the basic right to essential health care was stripped from so many people.

Then I thought of the patients who were waiting for me, took a deep breath, and walked into the next exam room. I don't know how many patients were aware of the Supreme Court decision, but everyone seemed especially kind, and grateful to be able to access abortion care in Massachusetts.

After we finished seeing patients, everyone in the health center got together. The mood was somber. A colleague organized a moment of silence. But we also felt empowered to care for each other and the patients who will continue turning to us.

**"We felt empowered to care for each other and the patients who will continue turning to us."**

- An Anonymous PPLM Abortion Provider

My greatest concern is for the millions of vulnerable people across this country who might not get the care they need—especially people of color, those without insurance, or those with limited access to transportation or child care. They need to be supported through increased access to abortion pills, abortion care via telehealth, and abortion funds. Providers also need support and protection from the laws of states with abortion bans. I'm grateful to Massachusetts for working on these issues right away—for myself, for fellow providers, and for patients.





## Building From the Ground Up: PPLM's Community Engagement Program



PPLM staff (left to right) Cesar Cruz, Sasha N. Viands and Liz Chao at a Pride rally in Springfield.

**By informing community members about Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts' (PPLM's) services and educational resources and establishing local partnerships to help more patients access care, PPLM's Community Engagement Program is working to disrupt disparities, reduce stigma associated with sexual and reproductive health, and improve health outcomes where patients live, work, and learn.** Each week, five Community Outreach Specialists (COS) based in Springfield, Worcester, Greater Boston, and Southeastern Massachusetts offer presentations, interactive events, one-on-one conversations, and materials introducing the full range of PPLM's care options.

In Worcester, PPLM's Sexual Health Ambassador Program (SHAP), a collective of Latino/a/x leaders, caregivers, parents, and community members, is dedicated to raising awareness and improving health equity through outreach and sex education. In response to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, SHAP's trained participants developed social media campaigns and other resources to reassure patients about the continuing availability of legal abortion in Massachusetts. SHAP also encourages adults and teens to engage with Bans Off Our Bodies, the national post-*Roe* coalition, while intensifying efforts to counter persistent abortion stigma.

In Southeastern Massachusetts, where no abortion providers currently exist, COS Shan Morrell is connecting people to PPLM's telehealth program, spreading the word about obtaining abortion pills by mail, and informing patients about the availability of financial assistance for transportation and lodging if they need to travel for care. "PPLM has forged nearly 30 partnerships in Southeastern Massachusetts - not only with health centers and providers but fair housing agencies, women's groups, and organizations whose values align with PPLM's commitment to compassionate, nonjudgmental health care," Shan says.

To better serve their communities, the team has worked to strengthen bilingual resources for Spanish speakers which include social media, events, workshops, ads, and digital and printed materials. "Nearly 45 percent of residents in Springfield are Spanish speakers," attests Sasha Viands, outreach manager, who is based in the region. "We provide information people need to make medically accurate, timely decisions about their sexual and reproductive health." A working group of Spanish-speaking PPLM staff advises the outreach program on adapting care-related English terminology into Spanish versions, accounting for varied dialects and cultural backgrounds.

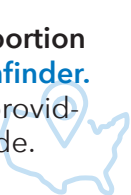
**"We're passionate about this work, and we're excited to be building this effort from the ground up."**

- Sasha Viands  
PPLM outreach manager

One of the principles of the Community Engagement Program, says Sasha, is that "we live where we work." Because they have local personal connections, team members are uniquely positioned to understand and respond to their communities' health care needs. "We're passionate about this work, and we're excited to be building this effort from the ground up."

# faces & places

Help people find abortion care. Go to [abortionfinder.org](https://abortionfinder.org) to find trusted providers based on zip code.



Support the National Network of Abortion Funds. Help people seeking abortion afford care at [abortionfunds.org](https://abortionfunds.org).



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**Top:** Sarah Burnes accepting the inaugural Nonnie S. Burnes Award for Advocacy, named in memory of Sarah's mother, on behalf of the Burnes family at Celebration of Choices in June.

**Middle Left:** Justin Campbell and Lucy Chie (event co-chairs), PPAF President Dr. Jennifer Childs-Roshak, Alicia Abad (event co-chair), and PPAF Executive Director Dr. Nate Horwitz-Willis at the PPAF Celebration of Choices in June.

**Bottom:** PPLM/PPAF staff members (from left to right): Ryan Berard (PPAF), Dr. Nate Horwitz-Willis (PPAF), Jen Slonaker (PPLM), Brenda Hernandez (PPLM), and Ellen Frank (PPLM) at the Bans Off Our Bodies gathering in Boston in June.



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Share your story about abortion or other sexual and reproductive health care on social media using the #WhateverTheReason or by emailing [advocacy@pplm.org](mailto:advocacy@pplm.org).



**Welcome to our new PPLM Board members: Gaby Goldstein, Aaron Hoffman, and Sara McKinney!**

Please support PPLM today by visiting [www.pplm.org/donate](https://www.pplm.org/donate) or emailing [development@pplm.org](mailto:development@pplm.org).