

July 29, 2025

United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Grassley, Ranking Member Durbin, and Committee Members:

We, the undersigned reproductive rights, health, and justice organizations committed to ensuring fair courts and access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health care, write to oppose the nomination of Chad Meredith to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

Reproductive freedom is a cornerstone of democracy, and courts must fulfill their constitutional duty to uphold the checks and balances that safeguard our democratic system. In order for anyone to fully participate in a democracy, all people must have the ability to make decisions about their health, bodies, and futures. We need a federal judiciary that delivers equal justice for all of us, with fair minded judges who will uphold the laws critical to protecting our reproductive rights and freedoms. That is why when news reporting on Meredith's potential nomination and extremist anti-abortion record emerged in 2022, many reproductive rights organizations coalesced to publicly oppose his potential nomination.¹ Now three years later, regardless of who is in office, reproductive health, rights, and justice organizations continue to oppose this harmful nominee.

Meredith has devoted his legal career to rolling back vital progress in advancing civil and human rights. His record does not indicate that he would be a fair-minded judge committed to equal justice for all people. As the Solicitor General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Chief Deputy General Counsel to the Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin, Meredith demonstrated extreme hostility toward the rights of pregnant people and abortion access.

The legal arguments he advanced while defending Kentucky's anti-abortion laws² belittle the capacity of pregnant people to make their own medical decisions, demonstrate an indifference to fair play, and evince a shocking disregard for the burden such laws impose on people seeking abortion.

¹ Planned Parenthood, Joint Statement from Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice Groups on Chad Meredith (July 5, 2022), <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/about-us/newsroom/press-releases/joint-statement-from-reproductive-health-rights-and-justice-groups-on-chad-meredith>.

² *EMW Women's Surgical Center v. Beshear*, 920 F.3d 421 (6th Cir. 2019), available at <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/19a0062p-06.pdf>; Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 311.727, available at <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/statute.aspx?id=44107>; *EMW Women's Surgical Center v. Friedlander*, 978 F.3d 418 (6th Cir. 2020), available at <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/20a0332p-06.pdf>; 902 KAR 20:360 § 10(3) (Ky. Admin. Regs. Mar. 11, 2025), available at <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/Law/kar/titles/902/020/360/>.

On behalf of Kentucky, Meredith defended a law requiring physicians to provide, display, and describe a mandatory pre-abortion ultrasound to patients, regardless of the patient's wishes and despite the lack of medical necessity for such a procedure.³ Meredith asserted the law was justified because "there are a number of patients who don't understand the nature of the fetus within them."⁴ Further, he argued that the state's interest in compelling doctors to perform this invasive procedure outweighed physicians' First Amendment rights.⁵ His paternalistic arguments dismissing the capacity of pregnant people to understand their own health circumstances and harmful attacks on their agency to make their own medical decisions demonstrate his lack of respect for the individual rights of pregnant people.

Meredith also defended Kentucky's transport and transfer law and regulation, which made it impossible for clinics in the state to obtain the necessary licensing to provide abortion care.⁶ While Meredith was Deputy General Counsel to Governor Matt Bevin, Bevin's administration brought an action against a Planned Parenthood clinic in the state alleging the clinic operated without a license—despite the state previously directing the clinic to begin operations in order to obtain an inspection and secure the necessary license.⁷

The same transfer law threatened EMW Surgical Center, the only remaining abortion clinic in the state at the time, with closure.⁸ In the face of this potentially devastating outcome, Meredith disingenuously said there would be no impact because of Kentucky's unique geography; the farthest a person would need to travel for abortion would be only 150 miles to a clinic in a bordering state.⁹ While Meredith claimed the law was in service of "health and safety," Meredith minimized the significant burdens inherent in such forced long-distance travel as well as the dignitary harms experienced by pregnant people unable to access essential, basic health care in their own state.

Chad Meredith has dedicated his career to defending anti-abortion laws that obstruct access to care and increase risk to patients' health. Meredith has repeatedly advanced legal arguments that

³ *EMW Women's Surgical Ctr. v. Beshear*, 920 F.3d 421 (6th Cir. 2019), available at <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/19a0062p-06.pdf>; 902 KAR 20:360, § 10(3)(a) (Ky. Admin. Regs. Mar. 11, 2025), <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/Law/kar/titles/902/020/360>.

⁴ Ryland Barton, *Appeals Court Hears Arguments Over Kentucky Abortion Ultrasound Requirement*, Louisville Public Media (July 18, 2018), <https://www.lpm.org/news/2018-07-25/appeals-court-hears-arguments-over-kentucky-abortion-ultrasound-requirement>; see also *EMW Women's Surgical Ctr. v. Beshear*, Nos. 17-6151, 17-6183, at 39:00. (6th Cir. argued July 25, 2025), available at <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/19a0062p-06.pdf>.

⁵ *EMW Women's Surgical Center v. Beshear*, 920 F.3d 421 (6th Cir. 2019), available at <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/19a0062p-06.pdf>; Ky. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 311.727 (effective, Jan. 9, 2017), available at <https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/statute.aspx?id=45477>.

⁶ *EMW Women's Surgical Ctr. v. Friedlander*, 978 F.3d 418, 423-424 (6th Cir. 2020), available at <https://www.opn.ca6.uscourts.gov/opinions.pdf/20a0332p-06.pdf>.

⁷ Assoc. Press, *Kentucky cabinet denies Planned Parenthood abortion license*, Lex18 News (Aug. 19, 2019), <https://www.lex18.com/news/covering-kentucky/kentucky-cabinet-denies-planned-parenthood-abortion-license>.

⁸ Assoc. Press, *Kentucky cabinet denies Planned Parenthood abortion license*, Lex18 News (Aug. 19, 2019), <https://www.lex18.com/news/covering-kentucky/kentucky-cabinet-denies-planned-parenthood-abortion-license>.

⁹ Ryland Barton, *Appeals Court Hears Arguments Over Kentucky Abortion Ultrasound Requirement*, Louisville Public Media (July 18, 2018), available at <https://www.lpm.org/news/2018-07-25/appeals-court-hears-arguments-over-kentucky-abortion-ultrasound-requirement>.

discount these harms and stigmatize people who have or provide abortions. In addition to his work defending Kentucky's anti-abortion laws, Meredith has submitted three separate amicus briefs in support of anti-abortion laws in Tennessee and Indiana.¹⁰ His record is replete with legal arguments that undermine the autonomy of pregnant people in making their own medical decisions, including accessing abortion care, which raises significant doubts about his ability or willingness to be impartial on these issues.

We all deserve a future where our courts protect our civil, human, and reproductive rights—including abortion access. Judges hostile to sexual and reproductive health care should not have the power to decide the futures of millions of people. For the aforementioned reasons, we, the undersigned organizations, oppose the nomination of Chad Meredith to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky and urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to reject his nomination.

Sincerely,

National Council of Jewish Women
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Women's Law Center
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Reproductive Freedom for All

¹⁰ Brief of Kentucky, et al. as Amici Curiae in Support of Petitioners, *Whole Woman's Health All. v. Hill*, No. 19-743 (U.S. Jan. 10, 2020), available at <https://www.ag.ky.gov/about/Office-Divisions/Amicus%20Briefs/19-743%20Amicus%20Brief%20Kentucky.pdf>; Brief of Kentucky, et al. as Amici Curiae in Support of Petitioners, *Box v. Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky, Inc.*, No. 19-816 (U.S. Jan. 27, 2020), available at <https://www.ag.ky.gov/about/Office-Divisions/Amicus%20Briefs/2020-01-27%20Box%20v.%20Planned%20Parenthood.pdf>; Amici Curiae in Support of Defendants-Appellants, *Memphis Ctr. for Reprod. Health v. Slatery*, No. 20-5969 (6th Cir. Nov. 16, 2020), available at [www.ag.ky.gov/about/Office-Divisions/Amicus%20Briefs/2020-11-16%20Memphis%20Ctr.%20for%20Reproductive%20Health%20v.%20Slatery%20\(Ky.%20authored\).pdf](https://www.ag.ky.gov/about/Office-Divisions/Amicus%20Briefs/2020-11-16%20Memphis%20Ctr.%20for%20Reproductive%20Health%20v.%20Slatery%20(Ky.%20authored).pdf) [www.ag.ky.gov/about/Office-Divisions/Amicus%20Briefs/2020-11-16%20Memphis%20Ctr.%20for%20Reproductive%20Health%20v.%20Slatery%20\(Ky.%20authored\).pdf](https://www.ag.ky.gov/about/Office-Divisions/Amicus%20Briefs/2020-11-16%20Memphis%20Ctr.%20for%20Reproductive%20Health%20v.%20Slatery%20(Ky.%20authored).pdf)