

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



MIKE COONEY
LT. GOVERNOR

May 7, 2019

The Honorable Corey Stapleton
Secretary of State
State Capitol
Helena, MT 59601

Dear Secretary Stapleton:

In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto House Bill 500 (HB 500), "AN ACT ADOPTING THE MONTANA PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION ACT; PROHIBITING THE ABORTION OF AN UNBORN CHILD CAPABLE OF FEELING PAIN; PROVIDING EXCEPTIONS; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING PENALTIES; PROVIDING CIVIL REMEDIES; PROVIDING PRIVACY PROTECTIONS; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 50-20-102 AND 50-20-109, MCA."

In 1999, the Montana Supreme Court ruled that the heightened right to privacy in Article II, Section 10 of the Montana Constitution "guarantees each individual the right to make medical judgements affecting her or his bodily integrity and health in partnership with a chosen health care provider free from government interference." Further, for over forty years, the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that the U.S. Constitution prohibits a state from banning abortion. House Bill 500 runs counter to these decisions, and to repeated Supreme Court rulings that affirm a woman's right to access abortion at all stages of pregnancy when necessary to protect her life and health.

As a father, husband, and son, I stand firmly opposed to restrictions on a woman's ability to make deeply personal medical decisions in consultation with her medical provider, and her family members and spiritual leaders, if she so chooses. Montana's elected officials have no business substituting their personal beliefs for the sound medical judgment of healthcare professionals or the deeply personal medical decisions of Montanans.

For these reasons, I veto HB 500.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Steve Bullock, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a long horizontal line.

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor

cc: Legislative Services Division
Greg Hertz, Speaker of the House
Scott Sales, President of the Senate