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STATE POLITICS

## After Roe decision, Idaho lawmakers may consider restricting some contraception

BY IAN MAX STEVENSON

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People gathered in downtown Boise on May 3, 2022 to protest an expected reversal of the right to an abortion. The night before, a leaked draft of a Supreme Court opinion showing that a majority of justices support outright overturning Roe v. Wade. BY [SARAH A. MILLER](#) 



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As Idahoans plan for a future without abortion rights, a leading Republican in the Idaho House would support holding hearings on legislation banning abortion pills and morning-after pills.

House State Affairs Committee Chairman Brent Crane, R-Nampa, said he would hold hearings on legislation banning emergency contraception and abortion pills during a Friday interview with [Idaho Public Television](#).

“IUDs, I’m not for certain yet on where I would be on that particular issue,” he said, referring to intrauterine devices, which are a long-lasting form of contraception.

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In a Saturday interview, Crane clarified that he supports contraception, including IUDs, and would not support hearings banning contraception generally. Instead, he said that he has heard of safety concerns with emergency contraceptives, like Plan B, and abortion pills, and would therefore be willing to hold hearings about them.

Crane said that there have been reports of “complications” caused by morning-after pills and of abortion pills causing “health concerns for the mom,” despite years of research showing the safety of [both medications](#).

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Abortion pills, approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 2000, are currently approved for use up to [11 weeks](#) into a pregnancy. Morning-after pills are emergency birth control used prior to conception and [soon after intercourse](#). They have been available for over two decades, and over-the-counter forms of the medication have been marketed [since 2006](#).

Between 2006 and 2010, 5.8 million American women reported using emergency contraception at least once, according to the U.S. Office on Women's Health.

"I would entertain a hearing to get the information out there and determine whether these rumors are founded," Crane said, noting that he had heard there can be "complications with those pills."

"One of the ways that you're able to get information and process that information and get to the truth of the matter is by having a public hearing," he said.

In a Friday statement, Assistant Minority Leader Lauren Necochea, D-Boise, said such potential legislation would strip "away Idahoans' most basic freedoms."

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"The admission that Idaho's Republicans lawmakers may outlaw safe and effective forms of birth control is our worst fear realized," she said in the statement. "This declaration should serve as a wake-up call for every Idahoan, and American, that our right to privacy and the very control of our bodies and lives are in their crosshairs."

On Monday, a [leaked draft](#) of a Supreme Court opinion showed a majority of justices support overturning Roe v. Wade, the landmark 1973 decision that found abortion to be a constitutionally protected right.

A final decision by the high court is expected in June.

If Roe is overturned, Idaho has laws on the books that would [effectively ban all abortions](#) immediately. The law would make an exception for pregnancies begun

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According to statistics from the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, only [25% of all rapes and sexual assaults](#) in Idaho were reported to police in 2018, which is the most recent year data was available.

### **BURDEN ON ‘LOW-INCOME PEOPLE, PEOPLE OF COLOR’**

On Friday, Necochea, who was interviewed alongside Crane on public television, said that banning abortion in Idaho would place a larger burden on poor women and women of color.

“People who have the means to travel to get this legal procedure across the border, they’ll be able to do that,” she said. “It’ll be low-income people, people of color who might not have the same social networks who can drive them across state lines, who can lend them the money they need. It’s an unjust law when it only applies to some people and not to wealthy people who have the means to find other ways to get this care.”

On Saturday, Crane said he wasn’t sure he agreed with Necochea, because in highly populated parts of Idaho, like the Treasure Valley, Oregon is not far away. He also noted that Idaho’s law allowing family members of women who receive abortions to sue providers is still [under review](#) at the Idaho Supreme Court.

Necochea also said that, in addition to curtailing abortions, Republicans in the House have also resisted attempts to pass legislation expanding social services for pregnant women or new mothers, or legislation that makes obtaining contraception easier.

“What I’m seeing is a Legislature that won’t do anything to help people with family planning, to help prevent unintended pregnancy, but is starting to talk about harsh, appalling punishments,” she said.

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