

# DEFEND A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE ABORTION!

The following statement was released March 1 by Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. president, and Osborne Hart, SWP candidate for vice president.

We join with those marching March 2 in Washington, Chicago and elsewhere to defend women's right to choose abortion. This fight is in the interests of all working people. The right to decide whether or when to bear children is fundamental to a woman's right to control her own life and win full social, economic and political equality. It is critical to break down divisions fostered by the employers and their government and to unite the working class.

The case before the Supreme Court March 2—Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt—challenges a reactionary Texas law that imposes unnecessary and onerous restrictions on abortion providers that have forced many clinics throughout the state to close. If the high court upholds these restrictions only 10 abortion providers will remain open there.

Whether and when to have an abortion must be the decision of women—not the government, a doctor, a relative or anyone else. It's a question of equal rights for women, building on the conquests won through the Second American Revolution and codified in the "equal protection of the laws" guaranteed by the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

This fight is being taken up by women and the working class worldwide. Capitalist rulers from Germany to Ireland to much of the semicolonial world either restrict or outright bar women's right to abortion.

Ever since the new rise of the fight for women's rights in the 1970s and the U.S. Supreme Court decision decriminalizing abortion in 1973, state and federal government officials have imposed increasingly onerous restrictions on its availability—denial of Medicaid and insurance coverage, shortening the time to seek an abortion, requiring parental consent, mandatory counseling and waiting periods, invasive and demanding ultrasound requirements, and, like in Texas, demands that clinics meet building standards set for hospitals—all of which hit working-class women and those in rural areas the hardest.

Working people are paying the price for the refusal of labor officials and the most prominent women's rights

organizations over many years to mobilize a nationwide campaign of public action to bring to bear the broad support that exists for women's right to choose abortion. Instead, they say raising the issue stirs things up and tell people to elect and rely on "pro-choice" capitalist politicians.

More workers today are looking for ways to fight to defend their jobs, lives and living conditions. Fast-food workers are protesting for \$15 and a union. Street actions against police brutality—from Salt Lake City to Council, Idaho—have forced the propertied rulers to begin to rein in their cops. Women fighting to defend the right to an abortion will find many allies willing to stand and march with them.



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Socialist Workers Party 2016 Campaign  
227 West 29th Street, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10001  
646-922-8186 | swp2016campaign@gmail.com