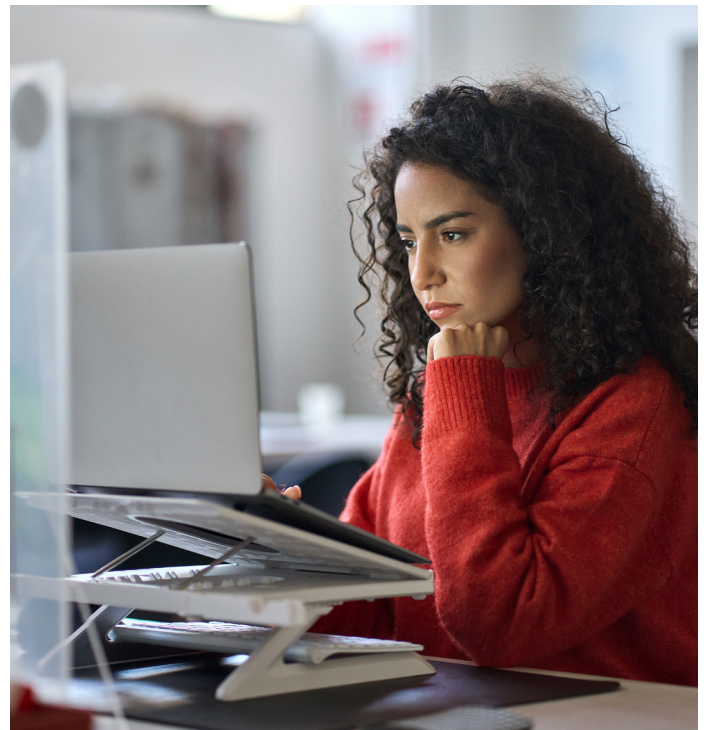


## State-Level Abortion Restrictions Cost the US Economy \$133 Billion

In the three years since the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*, the human and economic toll of abortion restrictions remains staggering, impacting all women but especially women of color.

IWPR's latest estimates show that the **16 states with the most restrictive abortion policies<sup>1</sup> are responsible for over \$64 billion in annual economic losses.** That amount could fund the average health care costs associated with pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care for nearly all the 3.6 million births in the United States in 2024.<sup>2</sup>

And \$64 billion only reflects the impact of the most severe restrictions, like total or near-total bans on abortion. Many other states do not ban abortion outright but still impose significant barriers that reduce access, such as waiting periods, mandated counseling, gestational limits, or restrictions on providers. When accounting for all state-level restrictions on abortion access, combined with the absence of federal protections, **the annual economic cost climbs to more than \$133 billion nationally.**



Abortion restrictions weaken the entire economy and result in fewer women participating in the workforce—not because they don't want to, but because policy decisions are standing in their way. Labor force participation among women ages 15 to 44 would be significantly higher if these restrictions weren't in place. Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and West Virginia—states with some of the most restrictive abortion policies—would see the largest increases among all states. In Alabama, Louisiana, and West Virginia, women's labor force participation would be 2.2 percent higher; in Mississippi, it would be 2.3 percent higher (Table 1).

Nationwide, without policy roadblocks to accessing reproductive health care, we'd see **over half a million more women—556,042—in the labor force every year.** That kind of shift wouldn't just help women and families, it would also improve the economy. **National gross domestic product (GDP) would rise by 0.5 percent** (Table 1), enough to more than offset the US economy's 0.3 percent contraction in the first quarter of this year.<sup>3</sup>

And the impact wouldn't stop there. States like Arkansas, South Carolina, and West Virginia—which rank low in both reproductive rights and per capita economic activity<sup>4</sup>—would see their state GDPs grow by 0.8 percent or more, among the highest economic gains nationally (Table 1).

While abortion restrictions harm women and the economy more broadly, they do not affect all communities equally. Women of color—especially Black and Latina women—are more likely to experience the consequences of restrictive policies and face additional economic and structural barriers to accessing care, compounding the economic harm.<sup>5</sup> IWPR's analysis reveals that barriers to abortion access result in (Table 2):

- Higher percentage of labor force losses among Black and Latina women ages 15 to 44 (1.4 percent for each) than among White women in this age group (1.1 percent).
- Larger percentage of earnings growth losses among Black women ages 15 to 44 (9.6 percent) than among White women in this age group (8.7 percent). That's money that could have gone toward paying for rent, child care, education, retirement savings, and other investments in families and communities.

**Abortion restrictions are not only harmful and unpopular, but they are also economically short-sighted.**<sup>6</sup> They reduce workforce participation, lower earnings, and limit career growth for women. At the same time, employers in ban states are facing growing challenges in attracting and retaining talent:<sup>7</sup> Residents—especially younger people and those with more education or who are planning to have children soon—are moving elsewhere,<sup>8</sup> and local economies are falling behind.<sup>9</sup> Protecting abortion access is essential not only for reproductive autonomy but also for advancing economic opportunity for women and their families nationwide.



**Table 1. Economic and Labor Force Impacts of Abortion Restrictions, Women Ages 15–44**

| State                | Average annual economic loss % GDP | Average annual economic loss | Average annual % labor force loss | Average annual labor force loss |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Alabama              | 0.8%                               | \$2,674,983,940              | 2.2%                              | 14,415                          |
| Alaska               | 0.2%                               | \$164,966,774                | 0.9%                              | 870                             |
| Arizona              | 0.6%                               | \$3,242,755,057              | 1.3%                              | 13,462                          |
| Arkansas             | 0.9%                               | \$1,653,657,022              | 2.1%                              | 8,387                           |
| California           | 0.2%                               | \$7,525,695,126              | 0.6%                              | 30,272                          |
| Colorado             | 0.3%                               | \$1,837,638,441              | 0.7%                              | 6,294                           |
| Connecticut          | 0.3%                               | \$1,037,104,849              | 0.7%                              | 3,514                           |
| Delaware             | 0.3%                               | \$351,544,122                | 1.1%                              | 1,416                           |
| District of Columbia | 0.2%                               | \$360,742,927                | 0.6%                              | 861                             |
| Florida              | 0.8%                               | \$13,169,064,616             | 2.0%                              | 54,885                          |
| Georgia              | 0.7%                               | \$6,129,768,389              | 1.7%                              | 26,052                          |
| Hawaii               | 0.3%                               | \$315,442,526                | 0.8%                              | 1,454                           |
| Idaho                | 0.8%                               | \$1,075,090,915              | 1.9%                              | 5,141                           |
| Illinois             | 0.3%                               | \$3,795,053,358              | 0.7%                              | 13,029                          |
| Indiana              | 0.8%                               | \$4,259,104,512              | 1.8%                              | 17,012                          |
| Iowa                 | 0.8%                               | \$2,068,968,064              | 1.5%                              | 6,871                           |
| Kansas               | 0.6%                               | \$1,317,066,041              | 1.1%                              | 4,585                           |
| Kentucky             | 0.8%                               | \$2,391,096,251              | 2.1%                              | 12,455                          |
| Louisiana            | 0.7%                               | \$2,387,365,812              | 2.2%                              | 12,615                          |
| Maine                | 0.4%                               | \$356,557,962                | 0.6%                              | 1,201                           |
| Maryland             | 0.1%                               | \$591,767,069                | 0.3%                              | 2,254                           |
| Massachusetts        | 0.3%                               | \$2,422,633,416              | 0.7%                              | 7,001                           |
| Michigan             | 0.3%                               | \$1,826,293,792              | 0.5%                              | 6,789                           |
| Minnesota            | 0.2%                               | \$1,227,764,538              | 0.4%                              | 3,338                           |
| Mississippi          | 0.8%                               | \$1,335,495,818              | 2.3%                              | 8,377                           |
| Missouri             | 0.9%                               | \$4,078,485,128              | 1.5%                              | 13,184                          |
| Montana              | 0.4%                               | \$288,924,894                | 0.7%                              | 1,133                           |
| Nebraska             | 0.6%                               | \$1,174,914,888              | 1.2%                              | 3,630                           |
| Nevada               | 0.4%                               | \$1,037,980,798              | 1.1%                              | 4,779                           |
| New Hampshire        | 0.4%                               | \$542,433,147                | 0.9%                              | 1,718                           |
| New Jersey           | 0.2%                               | \$1,865,340,856              | 0.5%                              | 6,306                           |
| New Mexico           | 0.2%                               | \$269,416,232                | 0.6%                              | 1,589                           |
| New York             | 0.2%                               | \$3,792,535,765              | 0.6%                              | 14,185                          |
| North Carolina       | 0.6%                               | \$4,865,271,976              | 1.4%                              | 20,644                          |
| North Dakota         | 0.5%                               | \$375,784,004                | 1.0%                              | 1,174                           |
| Ohio                 | 0.4%                               | \$4,012,869,841              | 1.0%                              | 16,232                          |
| Oklahoma             | 0.8%                               | \$2,138,353,598              | 2.1%                              | 11,303                          |
| Oregon               | 0.1%                               | \$419,907,726                | 0.2%                              | 1,512                           |
| Pennsylvania         | 0.6%                               | \$6,367,290,303              | 1.3%                              | 22,676                          |
| Rhode Island         | 0.6%                               | \$470,711,566                | 0.9%                              | 1,448                           |
| South Carolina       | 0.8%                               | \$2,955,536,869              | 2.0%                              | 13,735                          |
| South Dakota         | 0.8%                               | \$611,703,705                | 1.4%                              | 1,858                           |
| Tennessee            | 0.8%                               | \$4,261,338,986              | 2.1%                              | 19,771                          |
| Texas                | 0.7%                               | \$18,482,252,283             | 2.1%                              | 88,333                          |
| Utah                 | 0.6%                               | \$1,728,696,270              | 1.6%                              | 8,431                           |
| Vermont              | 0.1%                               | \$66,296,074                 | 0.2%                              | 198                             |
| Virginia             | 0.5%                               | \$4,067,417,237              | 1.3%                              | 15,845                          |
| Washington           | 0.3%                               | \$2,321,449,614              | 0.8%                              | 8,715                           |
| West Virginia        | 0.8%                               | \$914,165,836                | 2.2%                              | 4,297                           |
| Wisconsin            | 0.6%                               | \$2,814,474,833              | 1.1%                              | 9,769                           |
| Wyoming              | 0.3%                               | \$178,530,686                | 1.3%                              | 1,027                           |
| <b>United States</b> | <b>0.5%</b>                        | <b>\$133,619,704,453</b>     | <b>1.2%</b>                       | <b>556,042</b>                  |

**Source:** Institute for Women's Policy Research, "The Costs of Reproductive Health Restrictions: 2024 Analysis," updated June 11, 2025, <https://iwpr.org/2025-analysis-costs-of-reproductive-health-restrictions/>.

**Table 2. Economic Impact of Abortion Restrictions on Labor Force Participation and Earnings Growth Among Women Ages 15–44, by Race/Ethnicity**

| Race/ethnicity           | Average annual % labor force loss | Average annual % earnings growth loss |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| White                    | 1.1%                              | 8.7%                                  |
| Black                    | 1.4%                              | 9.6%                                  |
| Latina                   | 1.4%                              | 8.3%                                  |
| Asian & Pacific Islander | 1.0%                              | 6.6%                                  |
| Other                    | 1.3%                              | 8.4%                                  |
| All                      | 1.2%                              | 8.5%                                  |

**Source:** Institute for Women's Policy Research, "The Costs of Reproductive Health Restrictions: 2024 Analysis," updated June 11, 2025, <https://iwpr.org/2025-analysis-costs-of-reproductive-health-restrictions/>.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Kimya Forouzan, Isabel Guarnieri, Mollie Fairbanks, and Talia Curhan, "State Policy Trends 2024: Anti-Abortion Policymakers Redouble Attacks on Bodily Autonomy," policy analysis (New York, NY: Guttmacher Institute, December 2024), <https://www.guttmacher.org/2024/12/state-policy-trends-2024-anti-abortion-policymakers-redouble-attacks-bodily-autonomy>. These are the 16 states categorized as "most restrictive."

<sup>2</sup> IWPR's calculation based on average health costs associated with pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care and number of births in the United States in 2024. For average health care costs, see Mathew Rae, Cynthia Cox, and Hanna Dingle, "Health costs associated with pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care," Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker, July 13, 2022, <https://www.healthsystemtracker.org/brief/health-costs-associated-with-pregnancy-childbirth-and-postpartum-care/>. For number of births in the United States, see Brady E. Hamilton, Joyce A. Martin, and Michelle J.K. Osterman, "Births: Provisional Data for 2024," *Vital Statistics Rapid Release*, no. 38, National Vital Statistics System, April 2025, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr038.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> US Bureau of Economic Analysis, "Gross Domestic Product, 1st Quarter 2025 (Advance Estimate)," news release, April 20, 2025, <https://www.bea.gov/news/2025/gross-domestic-product-1st-quarter-2025-advance-estimate>.

<sup>4</sup> Melissa Holly Mahoney, "The Economic and Workforce Impact of Restrictive Abortion Laws," IWPR report #B394, Table 3 (Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, October 2024), <https://iwpr.org/the-economic-and-workforce-impact-of-restrictive-abortion-laws/>.

<sup>5</sup> For more detail on the experiences of Black women, see Martinique Free and Andrea Flynn, "Built for Our Survival: Reclaiming Black Birth from a History of Harm," IWPR research brief #B397 (Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, April 2025), <https://iwpr.org/built-for-our-survival-reclaiming-black-birth-from-a-history-of-harm/>.

<sup>6</sup> Melissa Holly Mahoney, "Post-Roe, Employees Want—and Expect—Businesses to Help with Reproductive Health Access," IWPR research brief #B396 (Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, January 2025), <https://iwpr.org/post-roe-employees-want-and-expect-businesses-to-help-with-reproductive-health-access-2/>.

<sup>7</sup> Mahoney, "Post-Roe."

<sup>8</sup> Melissa Holly Mahoney, "Abortion Bans Are Driving Away Young and Educated Workers," IWPR quick figure #Q115 (Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, April 2025), <https://iwpr.org/abortion-bans-are-driving-away-young-and-educated-workers/>.

<sup>9</sup> Mahoney, "The Economic and Workforce Impact."