

WASHINGTON--The National Health Law Program (NHeLP) joins health and women's advocacy organizations around the country today in recognizing the 40th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*

, the historic Supreme Court decision protecting a woman's right to decide whether, or when, to become a parent.

While *Roe* remains an important legal landmark and victory for women, more must be done to make reproductive rights a meaningful reality. "Unfortunately, 40 years after *Roe*, women still do not have access to the full range of reproductive health services they need, including abortion," said Emily Spitzer, NHeLP executive director. "Lawmakers at the state and federal levels have launched a record number of attacks on women's health in recent years, including efforts to restrict access to and insurance coverage for abortion and contraception."

Barriers to abortion services, including bans on public and private insurance coverage, unreasonable restrictions on providers, arbitrary waiting periods, and cost, are still significant challenges for women. The problem is particularly acute for low-income women who rely on federally funded health programs like Medicaid. The Hyde Amendment severely restricts federal funding for abortion services, and deprives low-income women of the means and dignity to make personal decisions about childbearing. Without public funding, the "right" promised by *Roe* is out of reach for many women.

All women should have access to a full range of quality reproductive health services, including abortion, regardless of whether they have public or private insurance. NHeLP actively defends women's health and the integrity of the Medicaid program, works to protect the advances made by the Affordable Care Act, fights attacks at the federal level, and combats refusal clauses that aim to restrict women's care. NHeLP recently joined 72 allies in asking President Obama to keep his federal budget for 2014 free of abortion restrictions.

Read more about how President Obama can fulfill the spirit of *Roe* in his upcoming budget in Emily Spitzer's latest [Huffington Post blog post](#).