

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell

Press Conference on GOP Attempt to Take Away Reproductive Freedom From Our Veterans

April 19, 2023

[\[VIDEO\]](#) [\[AUDIO\]](#)

Sen. Cantwell: Thank you, Senator Blumenthal, and thank you to Senator Baldwin for convening this, and for all the women and all the Veterans that are here today.

We're here today as the sign said earlier — we're not second class citizens. And certainly our Veterans deserve the access to health care from our VA system.

The VA, in a very sensible rule, says that no Veteran or their eligible family member can be denied abortion care, or be forced to stay pregnant when their health is at risk or in the case of rape or incest.

Now, this is such an important policy. In the State of Washington, there are over 22,000 women Veterans of reproductive age, and more than 300,000 women of reproductive age who receive health care from our VA in the country.

So if the Republicans were successful, bans like this would prevent them from getting the safe care that they deserve and need.

It's hard to believe that Republicans would be so heartless to the people who put their lives on the line to defend our nation to defend our freedoms, that they would be as cruel to force a woman who has been raped to take a fetus to term — denying her the chance to even talk to a doctor about her options for care.

We need to be successful today. We need the VA to keep this rule, and we need to keep moving forward and making sure that we give women full reproductive rights and access to the health care they deserve in our nation.

Thank you very much.