



Written by [Annalisa Pesek](#) on July 20, 2022

Hawley Legislates to End Left-wing Violence Against Churches and Crisis Pregnancy Centers

Heinous crimes, including the burning of the American flag, severe vandalism of private property, attempted arson, and the wielding of dangerous, deadly weapons by radical pro-abortion protesters railing against churches and crisis pregnancy centers, continue to be on the rise in the weeks following the Supreme Court's decision to uphold a [Mississippi abortion ban](#) and strike down the controversial 1973 decision *Roe v. Wade*, which held abortion as a constitutional right in America for nearly 50 years.



AP Images
Josh Hawley

A stunning list compiled by [The Washington Stand](#) includes [more than 85 attacks](#) on houses of worship and pregnancy support centers in the 78 days since a May 2 draft opinion leaked by [Politico](#) suggested the high court would rule in favor of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, thus paving the way for the overturning of *Roe*.

The New American previously [reported](#) on multiple attacks on pro-life organizations and churches beginning in May and spanning from Washington state to Wisconsin to New York. Still, the spree of terror facing these bedrock institutions is increasing.

On July 12, the Senate Judiciary Committee heard disturbing testimony from a director of a pregnancy center in Sacramento, who described how her center was approached by a man armed with a machete. The grim incident forced the clinic to close a mobile care unit and hire more than 25 full-time security guards to protect the center's staff and clients.

Seeking Stiffer Penalties

In response to the surging crime, Senator Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) introduced the [Pregnancy Resource Center Defense Act](#) to increase protections for pregnancy centers and churches and to toughen the penalties for criminals committing acts of aggression and hate.

Pregnancy resource centers and houses of worship are currently guaranteed federal-level protection under the [Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances \(FACE\) Act](#). According to that law, enacted in 1994 in [the wake of escalated attacks by anti-abortion activists](#) on abortion clinics, violators can face up to tens of thousands of dollars in fines and a maximum of three years in prison, depending on the number of offenses committed. First-time offenders may be fined no more than \$10,000 and sentenced to no more than a year in jail.

Hawley's bill stipulates steeper penalties for crimes against pregnancy resource centers as well as



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houses of worship. As stated on the [senator's website](#), protections include:

- Increasing criminal penalties from a misdemeanor to a felony for first-time offenses, and increasing the criminal fine from \$10,000 to \$25,000
- Guaranteeing that pregnancy resource centers and religious facilities that successfully sue will receive no less than \$20,000 (a \$10,000 increase)
- Imposing a 7-year mandatory minimum when attacks involve arson (up from a 5-year mandatory minimum)

In a July 14 [statement](#), Hawley tore into the Biden administration for ignoring the ongoing vile acts committed against pro-life organizations and churches.

"The Biden Administration has turned a blind eye while radical leftists attack pregnancy care centers and houses of worship," said Hawley. "And now left-wing politicians are trying to shut them down. It's time to put an end to the attacks and get tough on thugs who engage in violence, arson, and other means of destruction."

Democrats Respond

Hawley is no doubt referencing action taken by Democrats, including Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Congresswomen Carolyn B. Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Suzanne Bonamici (D-Ore.), and Senator Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), who on June 23 introduced the [Stop Anti-Abortion Disinformation Act](#).

That bill aims to end what the Democrats and the Left deem as "false advertising" by crisis pregnancy centers discouraging patients from obtaining an abortion and offering other alternatives.

Senator Warren has boldly called for a country-wide shut down of crisis pregnancy centers, recently [telling reporters](#) that "we need to shut them down here in Massachusetts, and we need to shut them down all around the country."

"With a far-right Supreme Court poised to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, it's more important than ever to crack down on so-called 'crisis pregnancy centers' that mislead women about reproductive health care. I'm working in the Senate to stop these deceptive practices and ensure every American can access the abortion care they need," said Warren in a [press release](#).

"No one should have to question that the person they are seeking medical advice from is actually a doctor or that information is accurate, objective, and complete," said Congresswoman Maloney.

"It is truly disgusting that reproductive rights are being threatened and attacked by crisis pregnancy centers whose guiding principle is to mislead, misinform, and outright lie to pregnant people in order to dissuade them from having an abortion. It is long past time that we prohibit these predatory tactics to undermine reproductive rights. This legislation cracks down on disinformation by simply requiring the FTC to ensure honesty for those that advertise reproductive healthcare," Maloney continued.

Team Hawley Makes an Alliance

Senator Hawley and his wife, Erin Hawley — a former law clerk to U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts and senior counsel at the [Alliance Defending Freedom](#) — have been in the media spotlight in recent days, as Congress begins to hold hearings on abortion access and the legal ramifications of the overturning of *Roe*.

On July 13, during a House Oversight and Reform Committee hearing, Erin Hawley faced questioning by Representative Ayanna Pressley (D-Mass.) about the threat that ectopic pregnancies pose for



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women.

Ectopic pregnancies are defined as a fertilized egg implanted outside the uterus, in a location such as a fallopian tube, that cannot support the pregnancy. Ectopic pregnancies often place the mother's life in danger.

"When an ectopic pregnancy ruptures, what are the chances it can be carried safely to term?" Pressley asked Hawley.

Hawley stated that an ectopic pregnancy cannot be carried safely to term and, "that's why the treatment for ectopic pregnancies is not an abortion."

"Again, can you just answer the question?" Pressley fired back. "When an ectopic pregnancy ruptures what are the chances it can be carried safely to term? And you know what, just to make clearer, I'm looking for a number between 0 and 100."

"I believe zero ectopic pregnancies — even those that do not rupture — have a chance of successfully being carried to term," Hawley responded. "That's why the treatment for them is not an abortion."

Pressley went on to say Hawley had a "deficit in her understanding," citing the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists that treatment for an ectopic pregnancies requires ending that pregnancy.

However, even the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists clearly states that "a tubal ectopic pregnancy *will never be viable*. It cannot move or be moved to a place in the uterus where it can safely grow to delivery. There are two methods used to treat a tubal ectopic pregnancy: medication and surgery." (Emphasis added.)

Along with his wife, Senator Hawley has pledged to end abortion in America. His new legislation will encourage a stronger crackdown on violent groups such as Jane's Revenge that vow to take down pro-life organizations.

In addition to Hawley, Senators Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), and Rob Portman (R-Ohio) have also [called for greater action](#) from the Department of Justice and U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland to protect Americans from violence at crisis pregnancy centers and churches. The FBI has claimed investigations into a number of reported cases, yet few if any arrests have been made, and those arrested by local law enforcement have been [released](#) back into society within a couple of days.

While Hawley's intentions are certainly noble, from a constitutional perspective, this only serves to give more power to the federal government over law enforcement, which should be left at the state and local level. Breaking and entering, vandalism, destruction of property, and threats or acts of violence are already illegal. True conservatives, while pro-life, should not support such federal overreach, no matter how well-intentioned.

Regardless, conservatives fighting for life cannot back down now. Taking a strong stance and supporting pro-life clinics, organizations, and churches by praying, volunteering, and donating is imperative to give women the ability to keep their babies instead of killing them. This is but one way the pro-life movement can and should respond to the scary reality of post-Roe America.



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