



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on May 12, 2022

“Pro-life” Utah Senate Candidate Opposes Overturning *Roe v. Wade*

Evan McMullin, who positioned himself as the solidly pro-life alternative to Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential contest, now says that he opposes the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and the passage of abortion restrictions.

McMullin, who is running as an independent to unseat pro-life Senator Mike Lee (R-Utah), responded to the recent leak of a Supreme Court draft opinion reversing *Roe* with a [lengthy statement on Twitter](#).

“As a pro-life Utahn, I’m concerned that the never-ending tug-of-war over abortion laws threatens to create a public health crisis and further divide the nation without solving anything,” McMullin wrote, seemingly oblivious to the fact that the 1973 decision is itself the source of most of the division over the issue.

“If *Roe v. Wade* is overturned,” he warned, “some states will immediately enact extreme laws — such as total bans on abortion, onerous limits on birth control, and criminalization of women in desperate situations. I oppose these laws.”

Other than McMullin’s dubious claim to still be “pro-life,” this represents a complete turnaround from his position in 2016. Then, as a third-party challenger to both Trump and Hillary Clinton, the former House Republican Caucus chief policy director attacked Trump for being insufficiently committed to reversing *Roe*.

“Why can’t [Trump] actually say the words ‘I want *Roe v. Wade* overturned?’ I’m the only pro-life candidate in the race,” McMullin [tweeted](#) in October 2016.

Two months earlier, he had bluntly [stated](#), “On the issue of life, it’s LIFE, so I would pursue court appointments that would overturn *Roe v. Wade*.”

Ironically, Trump would go on to appoint three of the five justices who signed onto the leaked opinion overturning *Roe*, while McMullin is now essentially attacking the 2016 version of himself.

MSNBC’s Mehdi Hasan — who, coincidentally, also [flipped](#) from pro-life to “pro-choice” in the recent past — [interviewed](#) McMullin Sunday, asking him about his sudden about face. McMullin’s response: “I am committed to the sanctity of life, but I think that means the lives of women, that means the lives of the unborn, of course, and it means the lives of children.” It does not, however, mean that sending the issue of abortion back to the states, where some legislatures might restrict it, is a good idea as far as McMullin is concerned. Striking *Roe*, he said, “Is not the way for the country to move forward on this



Evan McMullin (AP Images)



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issue.”

Curiously, among the [“Principles for Renewal”](#) on his campaign website is one entitled “Defend the Constitution,” which reads: “We uphold the Constitution as the inviolable and collective contract protecting liberty and justice for all, and honor the essential separation and balance it establishes among coequal branches of the federal government and the states.” Apparently, though, that does not extend to the issue of abortion, which, although it is not mentioned in the Constitution and was strictly a state matter prior to *Roe*, must now be forevermore legal throughout the land thanks to “emanations” and “penumbras” a handful of political appointees claimed to discern in that document half a century ago.

McMullin also told Hasan he would vote against a potential Senate bill banning abortion nationwide. While that position is eminently defensible in light of the Constitution, one doubts McMullin arrived at it through careful consideration of that compact.

National Review’s Nate Hochman has McMullin’s number. Responding to the candidate’s Twitter statement, he [writes](#):

A genuinely “pro-life Utahn” would presumably agree that the mass murder of unborn children could reasonably be described as “a public health crisis,” and that unborn children qualify as “those in need of our compassion.” But of course, McMullin is no longer really pro-life; as is true with so many of the most ardent Never Trumpers, the vapid appeals to “building a new American consensus” are more or less just cover for “embrace the entire left-wing program.” When McMullin talks about preventing “extremists from doing harm,” he’s talking about only one side. Abortion bans are extreme, writes the “independent” Senate candidate. But nary a word about the slate of blue-state laws legalizing abortion up to the point of birth.

Is it any wonder, then, that the Utah Democratic Party isn’t even bothering to run its own Senate candidate, preferring to [endorse McMullin](#) instead?



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