

Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy Delivers Remarks on the U.S. Supreme Court Decisions in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization and New York State Rifle & Pistol Association Inc. v. Bruen

06/24/2022

## Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Before I get to yesterday's ruling, I do want to quickly address this morning's ruling through which the Supreme Court's right-wing majority has erased a woman's long-held constitutional right to an abortion.

And, let me be very clear. Today the United States Supreme Court clarified, in no uncertain terms, that they do not value the women in our country or their ability to make their own decisions about their bodies.

This decision, while in no way surprising – it is, after all, what we were warned it would be – is still, no less infuriating and disappointing.

Obviously, we will have more to say on this in the coming days as we all go through the Court's decision. But, let there be no doubt, we will ensure that every woman in New Jersey has access to an abortion and to the full range of reproductive services they deserve as a matter of right.

While I signed historic legislation in January codifying a woman's right to an abortion into state law, I am prepared to take whatever action I can to secure a woman's full bodily autonomy and expand access to reproductive freedom.

Where we can, we will act to protect the rights and privacy of any woman who comes to New Jersey from states in which their rights are now eviscerated if not entirely erased.

I give my gratitude to the legislative leadership who recognized, as we did, the dire threat that this right-wing Court posed, and who worked with us to enshrine a woman's reproductive freedom in state law.

In the darkness of this decision, I look forward to working collaboratively with them to further strengthen access to reproductive care and protecting a women's right to her own body.

Unlike the United States Supreme Court, New Jersey will always stand on the side of our women. We will never stand between them and their doctors.

With me are Acting Attorney General Matt Platkin and State Police Superintendent Colonel Pat Callahan.

Yesterday, the right-wing majority which currently controls the United States Supreme Court ruled that states, like New Jersey, who believe that careful regulation of firearms makes for safer communities, can no longer control our own destinies.

The right-wing majority ruled, for the first time in our nation's history, that individuals have a general right to carry firearms in public, not just in their homes for self-defense.

To be clear, this decision will not make us safer.

Allowing ordinary citizens to carry concealed weapons into stores and malls, on mass transit, in daycare centers and hospitals, in polling places, or in bars and restaurants does not make us safer.

And it does not make our police safer as they do their jobs.

A right to carry a concealed weapon is, in actuality, a recipe for tragedy.

Moreover, it is not in line with our long-standing New Jersey values – values which have always supported the 2nd Amendment through carefully crafted and equally as carefully enforced laws to ensure that guns do not needlessly proliferate in our communities.

This decision runs roughshod over these values.

The right-wing majority has made its decision. As tragic and misguided as it was, we must live with it. That's how it works in our constitutional system.

But that won't stop us from doing everything in our power to protect our communities and our residents, consistent with this opinion.

As long as I am Governor, I will never stop fighting for your right to be safe from gun violence. And I will never stop fighting the despicable gun lobby that puts its own profits above American lives.

So, today, I am signing an executive order directing all state departments and agencies to review all statutes, rules, and regulations pertaining to them to determine what steps they can administratively take to prevent gun violence. This includes the ability to designate certain areas as gun-free, as well as their authority to regulate how firearms are carried, transported, or conveyed.

Further, while the Supreme Court may have dispensed with common sense, it did affirm the longstanding rules that have prohibited the carrying of firearms in certain sensitive locations, such as schools and government buildings.

Because New Jersey has had very strict limits on carrying firearms in public until this opinion, we have very few places where the carrying of firearms is prohibited by law. Going forward, this is no longer tenable.

I look forward to working with my legislative partners to put legislation on my desk to expand the number of places where firearms cannot be carried, including ...

... Locations where there will be a high density of people, including stadiums and arenas, amusement parks, bars and restaurants where alcohol is served, and public transit, among others.

... Locations with inherently vulnerable populations, such as daycare and child care facilities, hospitals and other health-care centers, and long-term care facilities and nursing homes.

... And buildings where important governmental or First Amendment-protected activities take place, including government buildings and other locations where governmental bodies may meet, polling places, courthouses and police stations, and any places where demonstrations and protests, or licensed gatherings, may occur.

This legislation should also set a default rule that firearms cannot be carried on to private property unless the property owner expressly communicates their permission – whether it be a shopping mall, a supermarket, or simply their own neighbor’s home.

That will protect homeowners and businesses who do not want firearms to proliferate in their homes and stores, while fully respecting everyone’s private property rights.

Under current law, certain New Jersey residents are categorically disqualified from carrying handguns, including those with criminal convictions or subject to certain types of restraining orders. We will also look to see if that list can be strengthened.

I am grateful for the Legislature’s commitment to combating gun violence. Just this week, both the Assembly and the Senate advanced a number of common-sense gun safety measures in my Gun Safety 3.0 package, including requirements for training and limitations on certain dangerous weapons.

With yesterday’s dreadful ruling, the need for these measures is greater than ever. I look forward to signing these bills into law as soon as possible.

I’ve said it many times before, anyone trying to sell you the notion that more guns means more safety is selling you a false bill of goods. The Supreme Court’s right wing bought that line.

But we don’t. And we know the majority of New Jerseyans don’t.

New Jersey has one of the nation’s lowest rates of gun violence not because we allow for unlimited guns on our streets, but because we have taken smart actions to ensure they stay out of the wrong hands and out of places where they don’t belong.

And we will continue to do so.

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