

INBOX

Moves to address laws on abortion gather force

Even in Mass., legal abortion does not ensure access

The Trump administration clearly has emboldened politicians to roll back reproductive rights ("In Mass., a push to ease access to abortion," Page A1, Jan. 28), but attacks on safe, legal abortion aren't new. For decades, politicians have imposed their own beliefs on others and erected barriers to abortion. Even here in Massachusetts, we must contend with decades-old, politically motivated restrictions that determine when, how, and why a person can access safe, legal abortion.

These entrenched barriers to abortion mean many people in Massachusetts must postpone care, navigate the judicial system, or travel to other states to access abortion. This is care they should be able to access right here and without delay. These restrictions were in place long before President Trump took office, and they urgently need to be addressed, regardless of who is in the White House or on the Supreme Court.

In Massachusetts, abortion is legal, but that's not enough. After all, a legal right means little to a person who cannot access it. With the ROE Act, which has been introduced in the Legislature, Massachusetts can ensure that abortion is not only safe and legal but also affordable and accessible to all people.

ASHLEY BROWN
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Ob-gyn has seen the harm of abortion restrictions

As an obstetrician and gynecologist, I have the great privilege of walking my patients through the journey of pregnancy and birth. I support them through the good and the bad — an ultrasound that shows a serious birth defect, a sexual assault, an unplanned pregnancy. Nothing is more frustrating than when medically unnecessary, prejudicial laws prevent my patients from accessing the health care they need, including safe, legal abortion.

I've seen firsthand how Massachusetts' onerous abortion restrictions harm the health and well-being of women and families. I've cared for patients forced to carry a pregnancy that would not survive to term. I've had to turn away patients because they did not qualify for MassHealth. These have been some of the most heartbreaking moments of my career.

These unjust laws prevent doctors like me from offering patients the kind of medical care they need and deserve. In a time when much of the country is moving backward on reproductive health care, the ROE Act can move us forward. My patients — and all people in Massachusetts — deserve nothing less.

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EDIT

With Edison housing hypoc well in Sou

Rarely has there been so much justifiable gnashing of teeth over the shortage of housing in the region — and the shortage of affordable housing in particular.

A recent national survey of mayors done by Boston University confirms that lack of affordable housing is their number one concern. Members of the Boston City Council are looking to raise taxes on real estate sales to fund more affordable housing, and the mayor is hoping for some more flexibility on linkage programs with the same aim.

Seriously: People do know where

So you'd think that a development that would provide more than 1,300 units of new housing and clean up a decaying old power plant to boot would be a good thing, right? Ah, but that development site sits on the edge of the South Boston waterfront — and, well, who would have thought the NIMBY world of Southie politics would apply to housing.

To wit: City Councilors Michael Flaherty and Ed Flynn are demanding a halt to the city's approval process, which has been underway for the past two years. And Senator Nick Collins and Representative David Biele are supporting legislation that would stop the redevelopment of the old Boston Edison plant virtually in its tracks — or at least force developers to abandon much of the housing component that makes it so desirable. Their bill would require a full review of the project by the Legislature and the inspector general.

The level of housing hypocrisy here is mind boggling — not to mention the concept of putting development of a 15-acre parcel of Boston land in the hands of lawmakers from Barnstable to the Berkshires.

The redevelopment of the Edison site, a joint