



Hawaii joins 'tele-abortion' pilot amid debate about procedure's safety



By [Mahealani Richardson](#) | January 3, 2018 at 10:57 PM HST - Updated August 14 at 6:00 AM

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - Hawaii is one of only four states taking part in a "tele-abortion" pilot project, and the politically-charged issue is riling up abortion foes.

Tele-abortion is a way to terminate a pregnancy after consulting with a doctor in a video-conference.

Dr. Ghazaleh Moayedi, of the University of Hawaii, recently demonstrated how a consultation for tele-abortion works.

"Hi! I'm Dr. Moayedi. We are going to take you through the process of teleabortion," she said to a colleague over a video conferencing feed.

A doctor must review an ultrasound and lab results and there's a consultation over video-conference.

The patient, up to 10 weeks pregnant, can receive FDA-approved abortion pills in the mail and take them at home.

"We are trying to show that medical abortion is safe to dispense to women through mail and through a telemedicine service and it's something that women want as well," Moayedi said.

The patient gets two sets of pills, Mifeprex and misoprostol, and Advil.

After the woman takes the second set of pills, the medical abortion process takes three to eight hours.

"The process is like inducing a miscarriage definitely stopping the pregnancy and then the second set of pills causing the pregnancy to pass," she said.

"Women were doing that part at home any way. What we are changing is that you don't have to take that first set of pills in front of us," she added.

Abortion opponents like Washington, D.C.-based Americans United for Life are worried about safety and complications.

"AUL has been very concerned about so called web cam abortion. We believe it's risky, reckless, and could actually be dangerous to the women who participate in it," said Steven Aden, chief legal officer and general counsel for Americans United for Life.

UH doctors in the study say tele-abortion is safe and complications are rare.

The only Hawaii abortion providers are on Oahu and Maui and doctors say tele-abortion improves access to abortion, especially for the neighbor islands.

"We trust women that they can take a pill on their own without us watching them," Moayedid said who hopes abortion pills will one day be offered in pharmacies.

The FDA is allowing this pilot project, and it's being funded and overseen by a research firm called Gynuity.

The other states involved are Oregon, Washington and New York. It concludes in the fall. So far, the project has 85 Hawaii patients.

Copyright 2018 [Hawaii News Now](#). All rights reserved.



72° 

Currently in
Honolulu, HI

FULL FORECAST

Sponsored By