

Passage of Abortion Ban and Women's Accurate Understanding of Abortion Legality

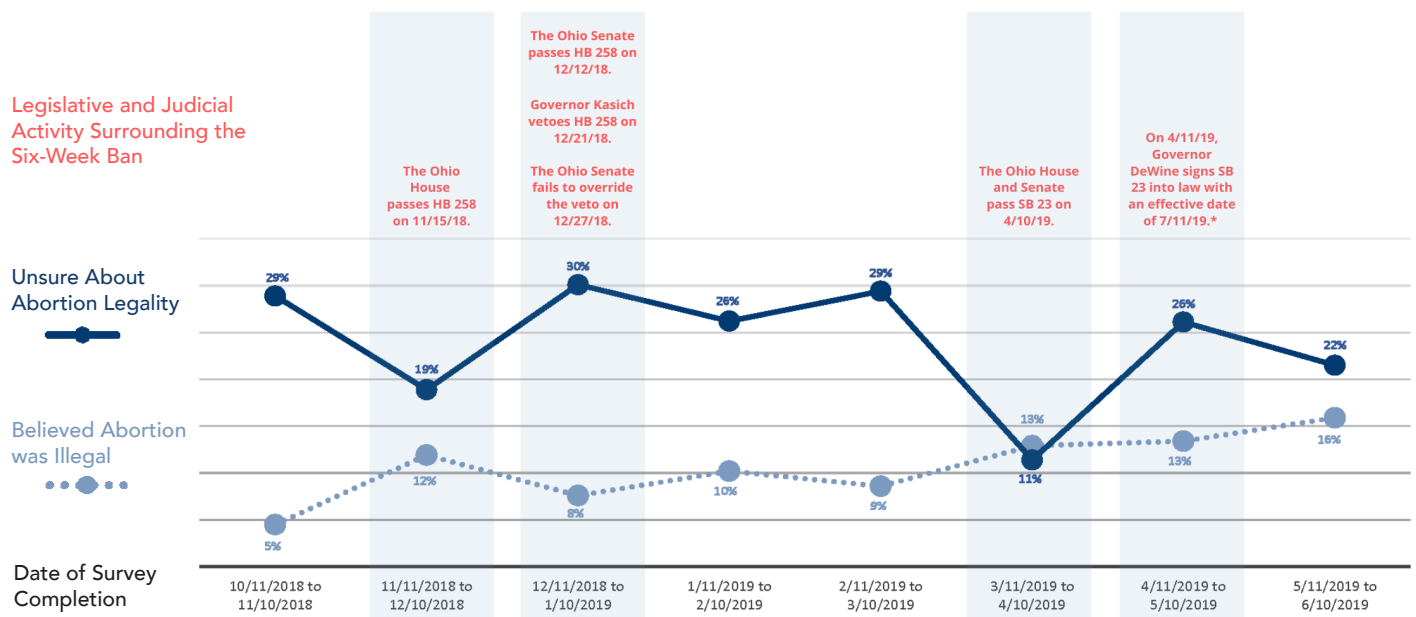
Gallo MF, Casterline JB, Chakraborty P, Norris A, Bessett D, Turner AN, Passage of abortion ban and women's accurate understanding of abortion legality, *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* (2021), doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2021.02.009>.

Of 2,529 women surveyed between October 2018 and June 2019, 26% were unsure whether abortion was illegal in Ohio and an additional 10% believed it to be illegal.

Key Findings

There was an increase over time in the number of women who mistakenly believed that abortion was illegal in Ohio, which corresponded with the period in which a six-week ban on abortion was passed by the Ohio legislature, signed into law, and subsequently blocked by the courts before ever being enacted.

Proposed Six-Week Ban Legislation in Ohio and Changes in Beliefs About Abortion Legality



*A U.S. District Court Judge blocked enactment of SB 23 on 7/3/19, before it went into effect. It is currently enjoined.

Public Health Implications

- Even if abortion restrictions never go into effect, the resulting discourse and debate about the legislation could lead some people to mistakenly believe that abortion has become illegal. These misconceptions may cause delays for people seeking abortion care or prompt those who are able to leave the state for care.
- People who are young, Black, unmarried, or of a lower socioeconomic status are more likely to believe abortion is illegal in Ohio. Consequently, people who already experience disparities in accessing abortion care may face an additional barrier.
- Given the frequency with which new abortion restrictions are proposed throughout the United States, uncertainty and misconceptions about abortion legality may be widespread in other states as well.