

# Blumenthal Joins Democratic Leaders at Women's Rally

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Senator Richard Blumenthal joined first select people from Easton, Weston and Redding for a pro-choice women's rights rally timed to coincide with the Women's Marches in Washington and all around the country on Oct. 2 to protect Roe v. Wade. The event, convened by State Rep. Anne Hughes and hosted by the Redding Roadhouse, drew a crowd of attendees from all three towns and beyond to support women's rights.

Blumenthal addressed the crowd first. He referenced his experience clerking for Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun the year after he wrote Roe.v Wade and the degree to which Roe has become an essential part of human rights law in the U.S. in the years since. Blumenthal told the crowd he'd written The Women's Healthcare Protection Act legislation in response to serious threats to choice across the country.

"The protections in this measure are more necessary now than ever before in our history because an avalanche of restrictive, reprehensible state laws is drastically reducing fundamental health care rights," Blumenthal said. "The Women's Health Protection Act seeks to strip away the deceptive pretext of safeguarding women's health when the goal of such state laws is actually to sabotage fundamental Constitutional rights, and increasingly they are achieving that goal."

Easton First Selectman David Bindelglass followed the senator, saying that, as a physician, he couldn't believe the current attempts to remove a woman's right to choose. "As a physician who understands the absolute right every woman should have to make her own decisions about her own health care, I find it incredible that in 2021 we're not only still debating whether women should have the right to choose, but that today we find ourselves closer to actually overturning Roe than at almost any time in the past 50 years," he said. "As a doctor, I find it unbelievable that this is still an issue."

Bindelglass cited the fact that 70% of Americans consistently say they oppose overturning Roe v. Wade, but that, as an elected official in a small town in America, he understands that opponents of choice are working hard to gain a foothold in local government, as happened in Texas, with the goal of sending anti-choice representatives to the state house, just as has happened in Texas.

"Today we see well-organized PACs funded by dark money working to spread division and misinformation right here in our local communities," Bindelglass said. "They are working against democracy, against democratic values, and make no mistake: if they are successful, they will work against choice too. If they gain a foothold in our towns, they will be one step closer to unseating key state legislators like Anne Hughes who create a firewall in Connecticut. That firewall against national anti-choice activists ensures women here won't lose the rights women in Texas have lost."

Hughes, who organized the rally with the first selectpeople from the three towns she represents — Easton, Weston, and Redding — in Connecticut's 135th district, issued a statement from Washington, where she was part of the national Women's March. Hughes was in Washington because she is among 900 state representatives from all over the county joining the amicus brief in support of Roe v. Wade.

"We are here marching in D.C., joining thousands in this fight for reproductive justice, for legal access to the full continuum of reproductive healthcare as a human right, rights that are STILL and once again under existential threat from the Supreme Court," said

Hughes. "We must mobilize everyone to protect safe, legal access to healthcare, including abortion as a right. "

Hughes quoted one of the speakers in DC: "'We'll fight 'until Hell freezes over, then we will fight on the ice!'" she said. "I am so proud to be joining our towns' leaders and constituents across the district gathering in solidarity in Redding to make sure our voices are raised and represented in the Amicus brief of the Supreme Court case that will challenge Roe V Wade."

*Photo at top: Easton First Selectman Dave Bindelglass, Weston First Selectwoman Samantha Nestor and Redding First Selectwomen Julia Pemberton with Senator Richard Blumenthal at the "I Dissent" Prochoice Rally at the Redding Roadhouse on Oct 2. — Amy Wolfcale Photo*