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## **BPW/FL ISSUES STATEMENT REGARDING ANTI-CHOICE LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN FLORIDA**

The Florida Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. (BPW/FL), a non-partisan organization dedicated to being the leading advocate for working women, wishes to state their strong opposition to HB167, which was just introduced in the Florida legislature. BPW/FL has a long history of supporting working women's rights, particularly in areas that affect women's economic equity and health care. The 4<sup>th</sup> item of our Public Policy Platform states, in part: "BPW/FL supports legislation that *ensures reproductive choice*, and full access to all health education and services."

Women have been guaranteed the right to reproductive choice since 1973, and the upholding of this right by the Supreme Court in *Roe vs Wade* continues to be the law of the land today. BPW/FL feels that the bill just introduced in our state, designed to mirror the disastrous law that Texas recently enacted, will cause irreparable harm to the working women of Florida if allowed to become law in our state. HB167 would introduce the same dangerous system of vigilante lawsuits that the Texas anti-choice law has inspired and would remove the ability of working women to make their own private decisions regarding their bodies and their health care needs. The proposed bill effectively bans all abortions once a pregnancy has reached its 6<sup>th</sup> week, which is long before the majority of women are even certain that they are pregnant.

Lack of choice is particularly hard on poorer working women, so this law is also an attack on women's economic self-sufficiency, which is Item 2 of our Public Policy Platform. The lack of the right to reproductive choice and accessible, affordable health care affects all women, including working women who in Florida do not typically have paid maternity leave.

America was founded on the principal of equality for all and derives its strength from individuals working together for a common good. BPW/FL believes in working toward this common good and strongly encourages corporations and businesses in Florida to advocate against this anti-choice legislation.

### **About BPW:**

Founded in 1919, BPW has a long track record of promoting equity for women in the workplace. BPW provides leadership through advocacy, education, and information within our communities, states, and the nation on issues important to women, including the elimination of gender discrimination, the right to equal pay, and ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment. Our mission is to achieve equity for all women in the workplace through advocacy, education, and information.