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## newsdesk

## News Roundup: Roe, Council, and Complaints

The abortion debate continues; Council gets ready

BY THE NEWS STAFF, 7:00AM, MON. JAN. 26

In this week's news roundup, the 42nd anniversary of **Roe v. Wade** brings the topic of reproductive rights back to the Capitol (not that it ever really **leaves**); **City Council** gets ready for its first meeting and at least some debate; and **Laura Pressley** isn't ready to say goodbye just yet.

- **Dueling Abortion Rallies:** Hundreds flocked to the Capitol Saturday to either denounce abortion or cheer on reproductive rights. Celebrating the 42nd anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, pro-choice activists donned their orange attire and gathered to hear speakers tell their stories about the fight for women's rights and remind the sizable audience that reproductive justice isn't only about the right to choose an abortion but includes being granted fair and equitable overall access to health care services, accurate sexual education, and living wages. Hosted by **Texas Project Counter** – a coalition committed to defending reproductive rights – and emceed by **RH Reality Check** journalist **Andrea Grimes**, the event also featured pro-choice lawmakers Rep. **Jessica Farrar**, D-Houston, and Rep. **Dawanna Dukes**, D-Austin.

"You are why there was a filibuster [...] you are who carried Senator Davis through those 11 hours," Farrar reminded the audience. "But we aren't done. Right when we think it can't get any worse, they surprise us. We have a more hostile environment in the Senate, so we are going to need you to be more vigilant than you've ever been before." Farrar then called on activists to closely follow legislation, show up to committee hearings and write to anti-choice Republicans, "Make sure they know you are watching, you are listening, and you are focused," she said.

Dukes, who revealed her personal **abortion story** last year, revved up the crowd by motivating them to stay engaged, keep fighting, and not be ashamed to tell their own personal stories. "No matter how much they try to make the term abortion pejorative, we're going to strip off that scarlet letter A and stand up and remove the stigmatism that has been placed on this and fight for our rights," she said. (Video of the pro-choice rally can be viewed [here](#))

On the opposite side of the Capitol, a swarm of blue-clad activists converged to applaud speakers who lauded the strides Texas has made to decimate abortion rights. Newly elected Land Commissioner **George P. Bush** and Texas' new First Lady **Cecilia Abbott** headlined the **Texas Alliance for Life**-hosted Saturday event, which drew an estimated 1,500 anti-choice advocates. Bush criticized the landmark Supreme Court case that legalized abortion as an "infamous" and "horrendous" decision that produced an ongoing "national nightmare."

Abbott, reading a letter written by her husband, thanked the crowd for pushing to cement Texas as leader of harsh abortion rules, including the package **House Bill 2**, which has already forced half of Texas abortion clinics to close. If the final provision of the law – currently awaiting a 5th Circuit **ruling** – takes effect, only seven providers will remain. "Because of you, innocent life is



Pro-choice supporters at the Capitol on Saturday

PHOTO BY MARY TUMA

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