Pregnancy Experts Condemn Indiana Supreme Court’s Decision to Uphold Abortion Ban

July 6, 2023, Washington DC – The Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) issued the following statement in response to the Indiana Supreme Court ruling on Friday, June 30, to uphold the state’s abortion ban in the case of Members of the Medical Licensing Board of Indiana, et al., v. Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Hawai’i, Alaska, Indiana, Kentucky, Inc., et al.

“The Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine is outraged by the court’s decision to deny essential health care to the people of Indiana, including those who experience high-risk pregnancies. Individuals with high-risk pregnancies are more likely to experience medical complications – for themselves, their fetus(es), or both – that can lead to increased maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality. In some instances, an abortion may be required to protect the life or health of an individual with a complicated pregnancy. It is essential that all medically appropriate options are available to patients and clinicians to optimize health outcomes throughout pregnancy.

“Abortion bans impact the ability of our members to make ethical and professional decisions in the best interest of their patients. We do not believe that exceptions for life and health of the pregnant patient contained in this ban sufficiently allow health care providers to make evidence-based clinical decisions in consultation with their patients. For high-risk pregnant patients, it is particularly concerning that this would require a maternal-fetal medicine subspecialist to wait until a medical condition deteriorates before providing medically indicated treatment. This “wait and see” approach to health care only jeopardizes patients’ health and compromises the medical decision-making process.

“We urge the Indiana legislature to overturn this egregious ban next session and reinstate full access to abortion care.”

For additional comments, please contact Kerri Wade at kwade@smfm.org