



Across the world for more than 100 years, March 8th has been a day to honor the contributions of women to the people's struggle. International Women's Day is a day to build resistance to gender-based oppression. Freedom Road Socialist Organization will take this celebration into the streets with marches and protests to build this struggle. We call upon all progressive people to join us in celebrating International Women's Day.

### Women's and reproductive rights are under attack

Last year saw a big attack on women's and reproductive rights when the Supreme Court of the United States overturned Roe v. Wade. Individual states have passed or are moving to pass legislation to restrict or ban abortion. Thousands across the country protested in response, and a new mass movement is growing to defend reproductive rights and fight for women's rights. This is in the best tradition of International Women's Day: organizing to fight our oppressors.

### A history of struggle for justice

International Women's Day started to honor the struggle of working women in New York City. When the Socialist Party of America celebrated the first Women's Day on February 28, 1909, it was in honor of the 1908 garment workers' strike in New York, where women fought against horrible working conditions. Women were also fighting for the right to vote.

Inspired by this, in 1910, the outstanding German revolutionary Clara Zetkin proposed to the Socialist International that International Women's Day become an annual worldwide celebration of women's struggles against oppression. It was approved unanimously. 1911 was the first year that International Women's Day was celebrated, and millions of people marched and attended rallies in over 17 countries. In the following years, Women's Day became a rallying cry for many different issues, from the anti-war to the suffrage movements.

### Resist oppression and inequality

While reproductive rights are currently under fierce attack, the inequality women face is more than this. Women workers, on average, only earn 77% of male workers in the work force. Black women earn about 77% of the average income for all women, and Chicana and Latina

women only earn about 70% of the average for all women. This wage gap allows the capitalists to make super-profits off of women workers. Sexual violence and intimate partner abuse is tolerated and taken lightly by the U.S. legal system. It's no accident that the vast majority of victims of these crimes are women.

The overturning of Roe is part of a systematic right-wing, billionaire-funded campaign to erase the gains of the women's, LGBTQ, and civil rights movements. Their vision for the country is shaped by a backward, religious worldview. They want to ban abortion, marginalize trans people, and get rid of any teaching about racist inequality in schools.

The question of reproductive rights is one of basic bodily autonomy. A person who does not have final say over what to do with their own body is not free. This also applies to the right of trans people to medically transition, which the right-wing is trying to restrict. The attempt to subject people's bodies to the control of the state, guided by a religious worldview, is not just oppressive to people who bear children. The legal foundation of modern LGBTQ rights in the U.S. is the right to privacy of the Fourth Amendment, and this broad right-wing attack threatens decades of progress for women, non-binary folks as well as LGBTQ people, no matter our gender.

Almost two-thirds of abortions are obtained by African-American, Chicana, and other oppressed nationality women. This attack on abortion rights has worsened national oppression in the U.S. Oppressed nationality women have also been subject to forced sterilizations at the hands of prison systems and ICE. Black trans women continue to be murdered at very high rates compared to other groups of people, and we must continue to fight back against this disturbing trend. Inequality is growing and liberation is needed.

### We will fight back

However, with every attack, the ruling class recruits their own gravediggers. They expose how unfit they are to run the country, how morally bankrupt their leadership is. The fact that half the country cannot access a safe and legal abortion has provoked righteous anger across the country. We must channel this feeling into mass organizing. We will build a movement strong enough to smash their system and break the chains of oppression.

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