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from the Illinois House of Representatives

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

State Rep. Kelly Cassidy

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Cassidy Introduces TExAS Act, Creates New Civil Penalties on Rapists and Abusers

CHICAGO – Today, State Rep. Kelly Cassidy, D-Chicago, filed HB 4146, the TExAS Act (The Expanding Abortion Services Act). The TExAS Act seeks to affirm the steps Illinois has taken to ensure that our state remains a place where the full range of reproductive health services are available and accessible to all people, including those forced to travel out of state from jurisdictions seeking to restrict access to abortion and other reproductive health care.

The bill creates a civil right of action enabling any person to bring a civil action against a person who commits an act of domestic violence or sexual assault, as well as anyone who causes an unintended pregnancy or any person who enables those acts. It establishes a minimum \$10,000 civil award to the person bringing the action with \$5,000 of that fine going into a newly created state fund to ensure that people who are forced to flee their home states to seek reproductive health care have the ability to pay for that care here in Illinois.

“When the Texas legislature, aided by the United States Supreme Court, declared open season on people seeking reproductive health care, it was very clear to me that our state is in a unique position to reach out our hands and offer people from Texas and other states who seek to restrict reproductive rights a safe haven,” said Rep. Kelly Cassidy, who was chief sponsor of the Reproductive Health Act establishing the fundamental right to reproductive health care in Illinois in 2019.

If enacted, the fund would be managed by the Department of Healthcare and Family Services and would be used to provide financial aid to women who may come to Illinois to seek reproductive health care in a safe and accessible way. The person found responsible for causing an unintended pregnancy, or a person committing an act of domestic violence or sexual assault, or someone who enabled those actions would be responsible for paying the damages.

“The measure in Texas is just one piece of the radical attempt to dismantle reproductive rights and access to reproductive health care across the nation. I’m proud to come from a state that will uphold the fundamental right for a woman to make the best decision for her own health,” said Cassidy. “When the legislature codified into the law the Reproductive Healthcare Act, we have ensured that the right to choose will remain in Illinois, no matter what may happen with Roe v. Wade, or what other states may do in creating irresponsible and dangerous policies like Texas.”

For more information, please contact Cassidy’s full-time constituent service office at (773) 784-2002 or email RepCassidy@gmail.com.

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