

## ROE FALLS, CITIES RISE—MANY, MANY BRUTALIZED



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*By Arizona Right Wing Watch*

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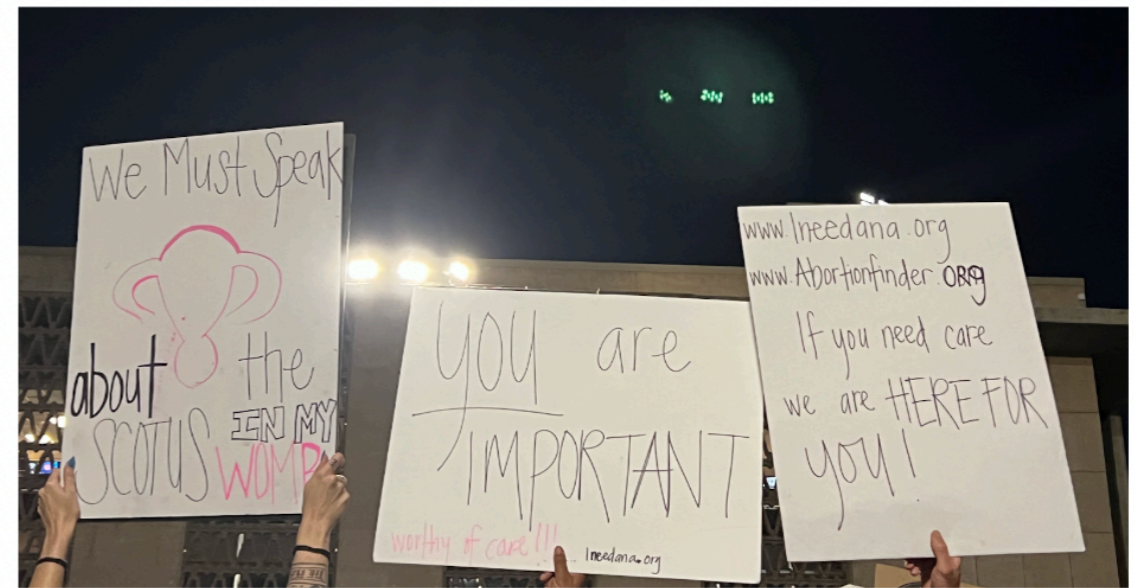




On Sunday, for the third night of protests, the militarization around the Phoenix Capitol increased again. Armed right-wing militias patrolled the Capitol grounds alongside DPS and the National Guard. While open carry is legal in Arizona, DPS still detained an armed pro-abortion protester. Drones again flew in the sky and razor wire was now added to the already-additional fence.

Organizations that raise funds to financially relieve patients seeking abortion and other family planning care in Arizona include the **Tucson Abortion Support Collective**, **Abortion Fund of Arizona**, and **Indigenous Women Rising**. Support them.

The Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* on Friday, making abortion illegal in many states and imperiling access in the rest. Reactions were swift. People had been anticipating an announcement since a draft of the decision was leaked to Politico in early May. Thousands gathered in cities across the country, occasionally harassed and attacked by right-wing extremists who have been mobilized all summer to heckle Pride events. While right wing media stoked fears that pro-abortion mobs would attack churches and anti-abortion groups, virtually all the violence was done by police against unarmed demonstrators, mostly women. LCRW staff attended protests around the country.



### HELL FROM ABOVE IN PHOENIX, COURTESY OF ARIZONA DPS

Within hours of the Supreme Court striking down *Roe v. Wade*, concrete barriers were already being set up around the Phoenix State Capitol parking lots. It was still early in the morning in Arizona, but the fascist police state was already preparing to take action against potential protests.

Into the afternoon, crowds of people braved the 105 degree humid heat and began making their way downtown to the Capitol. By sundown, thousands of reproductive rights activists were flooding the streets.

“Fuck you SCOTUS! Fuck Doug Ducey,” the crowd chanted.

Drones followed as they marched in the streets and circled the nearby park, Wesley Bolin Plaza. Armed guards lined the roof of the state Senate and House building, while police trucks equipped with sound cannons were scattered throughout the area. Occasionally lining the march, small groups of men affiliated with the white Christian Nationalist groyper movement could be heard shouting “whores,” and bragging “you lost.” Both Rep. Paul Gosar and far-right Gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake later praised the groyper counterprotestors on social media.

Radical art appeared on the concrete slabs that were placed long before protesters arrived. The memorials of Wesley Bolin Park were marked with clear messages:

“ABORT THE FUCKING COURT.”

Thousands marched back to the vicinity of the Capitol, chanting and listening to speakers address the crowd in Wesley Bolin Park.



Inside the Senate chambers, the Arizona Republicans were rushing to cram through a series of unfavorable bills before ending their legislative session, like a massive school voucher expansion that Arizona voters overwhelmingly voted against and a limitation on filming police officers at close-range.

Back outside the Capitol, as the night went on, the Arizona Department of Safety (DPS) began to launch teargas to clear the protests. Armed guards dangerously shot teargas grenades straight from the old Capitol balcony windows and the roof of the House and Senate building. Their high angle resulted in one gas canister becoming stuck on top of a nearby palm tree, igniting it. More with DPS shot from Wesley Bolin Plaza, firing into the park and shooting teargas grenades directly at protesters already leaving and far away from the Capitol building. Shooting wildly from multiple directions and angles left the entire street flooded in the teargas, which is a known abortifacient.

Reports of unlawful assembly were declared, but over half a dozen witnesses confirmed to LCRW they heard no warnings to disperse before DPS reigned hell on the protests. (I also heard no warnings.) DPS and the Arizona Republicans claimed the Capitol was at risk of being breached—hilarious, given the “Stop the Steal” era left the windows broken multiple times and received no similar response. The official DPS statement addressing their violent response cites “significant criminal damage,” aka a few instances of graffiti, as their excuse for collectively punishing thousands of individuals with a dangerous chemical, including children.

“All day long, dozens of armed state troopers hauled in bags and carts of weapons and equipment, They lined the hallways. I’ve never seen a response like it in my 6 years at AZ leg., including the times heavily armed dudes with horns were yelling at legislators,” said Arizona state representative Kelli Butler.

Pro-abortion activists were not deterred and thousands more showed up around the Phoenix Capitol the following night. This time, fence blockades were set up around the Capitol grounds surrounding the entire building. Anti-SCOTUS chants filled the air for a second night in a row.

Also back for a second night was Arizona DPS. Street medics were harassed and had their bags illegally searched. Then, late into the night, the militarized DPS moved in again. This time DPS detained everyone left in the vicinity, including clearly marked members of the press and Legal Observers with the National Lawyers Guild. In what’s certain to be a pattern as pro-abortion protests continue, a judge found there was no probable cause for the charges and arrest.