**StopPatriarchy.org Holds Dramatic Protest Outside HB2 Court Hearing; Publishes Advocacy Ad in Response to Unprecedented Abortion Restrictions**

**Pioneering Providers on Abortion Rights Freedom Ride Advisory Board Pivotal in Both are Available for Comment**

Mon. Aug. 4: Protest on Opening Day of Trial, 9am - 12pm

Federal Courthouse, 9am W 5th at Nueces St, Austin, TX

Wed. Aug. 6: People's Hearing, 7pm, The Austin Centre, 3809 S 2nd St, Austin

Thurs. Aug. 7: Coat Hanger Protest, 4pm, Rick Perry's Mansion, 1010 Colorado St.

As an appeal to stop the closure of all but six abortion clinics in Texas begins in Austin courthouse on Monday morning, StopPatriarchy.org will hold a dramatic street protest and has published an Advocacy Ad signed by **Gloria Steinem**, **Mark Ruffalo**, **Cornel West** and other notable figures strongly opposing the closure of abortion clinics.

[The ad](https://org.salsalabs.com/o/1170/images/StopPat_Ad__HalfPage_L-PRINT-NO-bleed.pdf) will appear in the Austin Statesman the first day of the HB2 trial and shines a spotlight on the emergency situation facing women and explains the need for resistance. It reads in part:

*“Forcing women to have children against their will is a form of enslavement..What happens this summer in Texas will affect women everywhere. It is the responsibility of everyone who does not want to see women forced to have children against their will to stand up and fight. Not some time in the future, but now."*

The Abortion Rights Freedom Ride has converged in Texas with volunteers from around the entire country because of the emergency situation facing women nationwide as abortion rights have come under unprecedented attack in recent years.**Merle Hoffman**, a pioneering abortion provider who opened one of the nations very first legal clinics two years before Roe v. Wade, and member of the Advisory Board states:*"Over the past four decades I have been in many many battles, seen women's rights be assaulted from many sides, but never has the threat been so palpable, so powerful, as it is now. I am calling on all of us to become Freedom Riders for women's lives in any way that you can."*

**Diane Derzis**, owner of the last abortion clinic in MS, and whose Alabama clinic was bombed in 1998, explains why she has decided to join with this determined resistance: *"We became far too reliant upon courts to maintain the status quo, while our enemy is in the trenches with these churches raising money, raising time, electing people...I think it's time starting thinking outside the box, because what we've been doing has not been working."*

**Carol Downer**, Co-founder of *Feminist Women’s Health Center*, Los Angeles, which began doing abortions in 1971, is also a part of the Advisory Board. She speaks to the way the Abortion Rights Freedom Ride is reaching into an untapped reservoir of outrage at the attacks on women’s right to abortion with it’s bold and unapologetic call for *"Abortion on Demand and Without Apology" and willingness to directly confront those who would like to see abortion done away with, states: "I believe that the Freedom Ride will awaken those at our end of the continuum who care passionately about women having reproductive freedom..It will be raucous but non-violent; it will be confrontational and enlightening."*

**Sunsara Taylor**, StopPatriarchy.org Initiator and writer for Revolution speaks to what has been seen by some as a controversial strategy of mass independent resistance through both Bloody Coat Hanger Protests and Public "People's Hearings" throughout Texas during month of August and beyond: *"There is really only one moral question: Will women be forced to have children against their will or will they be treated as full human beings which means being able to decide for themselves when and whether to be a mother."*

For a full schedule of the Abortion Rights Freedom Ride events in Texas during the month of August and beyond, see StopPatriarchy.org

**HoustonPress Coverage of Coat Hanger Protest (PICTURES):**

<http://blogs.houstonpress.com/hairballs/2014/08/photos_stop_patriarchy_protests_outside_harris_county_gop_office.php>

**People's Hearing and Launch of Abortion Rights Freedom Ride in Houston, TX (VIDEO):**

<http://www.stoppatriarchy.org/peoples-hearings.html>