

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Texas Abortion Ban Is a Call to Action for Brands and Agencies

Activists warn against self-serving PR stunts in the latest attack on reproductive rights



TX SB 8, which bans abortion after around six weeks of pregnancy, was signed into law on Sept. 1 Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images



By **Emmy Liederman**
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Following the passage of Texas SB 8, which prohibits abortion about six weeks into pregnancy and incentivizes citizens to report pregnancy terminations with a finder’s fee, online abortion clinic Hey Jane approached Dame CEO Alexandra Fine to produce a full-page ad in The New York Times defending reproductive rights.

Dame, which crafted **an ad supporting** the same cause in 2019 when the Trump administration supported anti-abortion legislation, built a coalition of healthcare brands to develop a message of solidarity for the lawyers, physicians and activists who are fighting against the Texas legislation.

“You start a brand because you want to make a difference in the world,” Fine told Adweek. “We are letting the world know what these organizations care about.”

Advertisement

Access is *dignity*. Access is *power*. Access is *freedom*.

To the physicians and healthcare workers in Texas who, in the face of SB8, never quit providing care;
To the organizations on the ground dedicated to securing access to abortion across state lines;
To the activists amplifying the voices of those ready and willing to help;
To the lawyers fighting tooth-and-nail to challenge the courts;
To the politicians speaking out against the injustice;
To everyone posting, sharing, and donating:

Thank you for your resilience.


We believe everyone deserves the right to govern their own bodies and determine their own reproductive destinies. Access to reproductive care empowers individuals to lift up entire communities. Access means better health outcomes, fewer economic hardships, and greater equity for marginalized populations.

Texas Senate Bill 8 — along with an alarming number of other abortion restrictions being introduced nationwide — denies us that access and that right.

You didn't quit; we won't either.

We stand with you and will continue fighting, shoulder-to-shoulder.

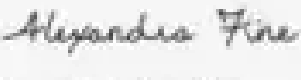
In solidarity,



Kiki Freedman, Co-founder & CEO

HeyJane

Modern, virtual abortion care



Alexandra Fine, Co-founder & CEO

Dame

Products for pleasure



Kate Harris, MD, MPH, MS, Chief Medical Officer

FOLX

Birth control. Search on your terms.



Anna Haddy, Founder & CEO

REAL


Make your own decisions



Lisa Peltz, Co-founder & CEO

LOOM

New. Reimagined.



Tina Williams, Co-founder & CEO

STEVEN STRAUPE

Real health. Personalized care.



Wade Fitzgerald, Co-founder

Flare

Prescription birth control. Reimagined.



Ben Miller, Founder & CEO

Prisma


Prescription birth control. Reimagined.



Y. Fine, Co-founder & CEO

fur


For real. For real. For real.



Dr. Stephanie, Chief Medical Officer

Cula

The abortion. Reimagined.



Kate Harris, Co-founder & CEO

coa

Real birth control. Reimagined.



Visit accessisfreedom.com to help expand abortion access in Texas and across the nation.

Paid for by: (Reg. 2014) Conna TOLB (Reg. 2014) Real LDOM Twitter Starting and Pinn

The ad appeared in the Sept. 12 edition of The New York Times New York Times

Readers of the Sunday Times were then invited to visit accessisfreedom.com, where they could donate to organizations like the Texas Equal Access Fund or share initiatives in support of abortion access on social media.

Consumers are demanding action from brands and agencies, but they know the difference between genuine progress and self-serving publicity stunts.

“Brands, do what you say you’re going to do,” said Leah Hacker, CEO of research and strategy firm Rebel & Co, who pointed to AT&T’s simultaneous **diversity and inclusion language** and donations to politicians who support TX SB 8. “The world knows the difference between a real line in the sand and a marketing campaign.”

Adweek spoke with marketers about their role in initiating change. Industry leaders emphasized several priorities, including supporting their own employees and audiences, while also advising clients on if and how they should weigh in.

Adweek reached out to a number of agencies with a presence in Texas to understand if and how they were responding to TX SB 8. The Marketing Arm, PMG, R/GA and The Richards Group declined to comment for our story.

Prioritize your employees

On Sept. 10, Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff **announced on Twitter** that if Texas-based employees want to exit the state, the company will financially support their relocation. Cindy Gallop, CEO and founder of IfWeRanTheWorld and MakeLoveNotPorn, has a straightforward demand for every holding company and agency: support your female employees’ right to choose and get every colleague on the same page.

“Abortion is a man’s issue as much as it is a woman’s issue,” said Gallop. “They need to make it crystal clear that when it comes to any issue in reproductive health that any female employee is in need of, they are there for them.”

According to Gallop, male employees often forget to do something that seems like a simple first step in navigating these policies: ask female colleagues what they need and want from the company, and listen.

Jacqueline Thompson, senior vice president of accounts at Austin-based agency Bakery, stressed that corporations must change the narrative around abortion rights to fully support their employees.

“It’s great that more organizations give their employees paid maternal and paternal leave and important benefits like IVF coverage for same-sex couples, but they need to consider abortion in family planning as well,” she said.

Talk to your clients

Despite their **persuasive marketing language** and calls for a more equitable workforce, AT&T, CVS Health and UnitedHealth Group are among the top donors to the legislation’s sponsors.

“Every holding company and agency should be having a convo with any client in their portfolio that is in any way contributing to this legislation and explain why they need to withdraw their support,” said Gallop.



UnitedHealth Group
@UnitedHealthGrp



Women are bold. Women are powerful. Women create change for the next generation.

Hear more about the legacy [@SpeakingJoy_jf](#) hopes to leave behind for the next generation of women in honor of [#WomensEqualityDay](#) → uhg.co/WED5



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