

By Sam Stroud

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LANSING – Over 100 protestors marched through the streets of Downtown Lansing at noon on Oct. 8th in solidarity with nationwide marches for women’s reproductive rights.

The national protests, called the Women’s Wave March 2022, came from the efforts of the Women’s March Foundation, an organization with the primary goal of creating networks of feminist activists to organize large-scale demonstrations across the United States to bring awareness to specific issues. The demonstrations occurred on Oct. 8th to mark one month until the November midterms which could decide the fate of abortion access in multiple states, including Michigan.

The Lansing Women’s Wave March was organized by a network of student and nonprofit organizations, the primary one being Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights, an organization formed after the Supreme Court’s draft opinion about the overturning of Roe v. Wade was leaked to arrange protests and hold events to oppose the decision.

Cindy Luiz, a 62-year-old member of Rise Up 4 Abortion’s Detroit chapter, gave a speech on the steps of the Michigan State Capitol shortly before the march began to explain the reasoning behind the demonstration.

"We have to be out here demanding that (the overturning of Roe v. Wade) is reversed... We have to disrupt society and it's not going to be a one-shot deal, it's not going to be one demonstration. For 50 years Republicans have been plotting and planning to get rid of the right to abortion and they don't give a f**k how we vote," said Luiz.

Luiz, her fellow organizers, and many protestors in the crowd wore green or had a green bandana tied to their wrists, something Charlie Nolan, a 14-year-old student at Everett High School and a Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights organizer for the event, explained held significance to their goals for the march.

"Women in Argentina, which is a very Christian and patriarchal country, all gathered with this green color and protested in the streets. It then eventually spread to Columbia and Mexico and they all got abortion rights because of the protests in the streets under this one color so we use this green color and green bandana to represent what we need in the United States," said Nolan.

The Green Wave was a feminist-led movement which began in the early 2000s in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to agitate for the legalization of abortion. In the decades since it began, it has spread throughout Latin America and internationally to places like Kenya.

"The most important thing is to get out there and speak for what you believe in, spreading the Green Wave here. That's what these protests across the country right now are all about," continued Nolan.

After the march had concluded at 1:30pm, Luiz remarked how she had little faith in the voting process and believed demonstrations like the one on Oct. 8th were the best way to reverse the Supreme Court's overruling of Roe v. Wade.

"You look at things like Stonewall and the Civil Rights Movement... big change from those things didn't come from voting, they came from marching in the streets," said Luiz.

Luiz said she believes she is in the minority and many activists and members of Rise Up 4 Abortion Rights do believe in the voting process. Elaina Wess, a 28-year-old Lansing resident and attendee at the march, affirmed this and spoke on the importance of voting.

"We need to keep our rights. I feel like it's become very quiet and people are getting comfortable with adjusting to the idea of the new normal, so no matter what you got to do make sure you vote. This election is especially important with Dixon and (Proposal 3)," said Wess.

This midterm election would decide the next Governor, either pro-abortion incumbent Gov. Gretchen Whitmer or anti-abortion candidate Tudor Dixon. The decision of abortion could also be decided with Proposal 3, a law which would enshrine the right to abortion in the Michigan constitution if passed.

