Under State Control: Our Body, Ourselves

By Ellen K. Halter, PEG Contributor

Through Dem Labs and Flip Grid technology, The Birthright Impact Campaign made a film, “Birthright: A War story” based on actual women telling their horror stories of being denied prescriptions for contraception or to induce an abortion, or evacuate a dying or dead fetus, based on the religious beliefs of the pharmacist.

 Now, the director, Civia Tamarkin, is using the film as a weapon to “inform, inspire and motivate the civic, electoral and political actions” against the war on women and their bodies. The stories here are powerful. One Arizona woman, for example, was denied medication to evacuate a much wanted but dying fetus. The moderator notes, “this is all part of the collateral damage of the war on abortion.” (In six states, pharmacists and pharmacies are permitted that choice based on their religious or moral beliefs.)

 The film documents the ascendancy to power of anti-choice legislators in state houses throughout the country, which increasingly threatens a woman’s right to control her own reproductive future. The video opens with one woman asserting, “It is a scary time in the United States for a woman to become pregnant.” Another woman adds, “Every aspect is now being subject to state punishment, control and surveillance.” Later, a conservative man observes, “The state has the right to intervene in a woman’s pregnancy from the second she becomes pregnant. That’s an intrusion in the life of an individual that should shock every true conservative in this country.” It should shock every progressive as well.