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## Chilling Rhetoric

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I am chilled to hear some politicians talking about women as if they have never met one, talked with one, or loved one.

At nearly 77, I have moved through all the phases of reproductive life, and as a psychologist, I've been privileged to accompany many women along their journeys.

What I know to be true is this:

Nothing goes to the core of identity like the issues and experiences surrounding reproduction. They are essential and inseparable to who we are.

Women do not need “protection” at the whim of leaders because we happen to live in female bodies. We simply need the same protection as men, freedom to make choices.

Our concerns about reproductive rights are linked with who we are, not how old we are. The significance of an individual woman's reproductive history — no matter how it plays out — keeps our interest in the matter alive, regardless of age.

I doubt many women will be voting on Nov. 5 for those candidates who underestimate us and talk about us as if we are not in the room. We're right here. Get to know us.

Emma Mellon, Wayne