

*CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell*

07/26/22

6:31:07 p.m. [TEASE]

17 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: CBS News; Exclusive; Doctor Speaks Out]

NORAH O'DONNELL: Our exclusive interview tonight with Dr. Caitlyn Bernard, the Indiana ob/gyn who, according to state documents, provided a nonsurgical abortion to a 10-year-old rape victim.

DR. CAITLYN BERNARD: I'm not only the only provider who has taken care of young children needing abortion care.

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6:37:57 p.m.

3 minutes and 58 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Abortion Rights Protest]

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking News; Demonstrators Protest Proposed Abortion Ban in Indiana]

O'DONNELL: Well, tonight the state-by-state battle over abortion rights are far from over. In Indiana, thousands of protesters demonstrated at the state House as lawmakers gathered to consider a Republican bill that would ban nearly all abortions and punish doctor who perform them. One of the doctors is Caitlyn Bernard. She's an ob/gyn in Indiana. State health records obtained by CBS News show that she provided a nonsurgical abortion to a 10-year-old rape victim from Ohio. That state has a strict ban, without exceptions for rape and incest. But because of privacy laws, the doctor can't confirm this was her patient. And now, Dr. Bernard is sitting down for her first television interview since the case garnered international attention.

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Exclusive Interview]

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Exclusive; Indiana Doctor at Center of Abortion Debate Speaks Out]

BERNARD: I think we're at a time in our country where people are starting to realize the impact of these antiabortion laws, and now when it's finally become impossible for some people, I think people realize that that is actually not what they intended, that is not what they want for children, for women, to be put in these situations of life-threatening conditions, of traumatic pregnancies.

O'DONNELL: Generally speaking, how often do you receive calls from doctors in other states that say they have young, young women who have been raped and need an abortion?

BERNARD: Unfortunately, sexual assault in children is not uncommon. I'm not the only provider who has taken care of young children needing abortion care.

O'DONNELL: When your name was publicly attached to this case, the attorney general of Indiana said he would investigate you. What was your reaction?

BERNARD: It's been really difficult.

O'DONNELL: Have you felt threatened?

BERNARD: Yes, yes, I have. And it — you know, it shows how, you know, abortion, instead of being part of healthcare — which it is — a needed, life-saving procedure — which it is — has been used to create a wedge between people politically and personally.

O'DONNELL: Indiana's attorney general Todd Rokita described you as an abortion activist acting as a doctor. How do you respond to that?

BERNARD: I'm a physician. I spent my entire life working to have this position, to be able to take care of patients every single day.

O'DONNELL: Did you at any point violate privacy laws?

BERNARD: No.

O'DONNELL: And have you failed to report any recent abortions?

BERNARD: Nope.

O'DONNELL: How would you describe how things have changed since the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*?

BERNARD: We are hearing stories of people in dire circumstances, complications of their pregnancies or traumatic situations and are needing abortion care and not able to get it.

O'DONNELL: Is it worse than you imagined?

BERNARD: It's worse faster.

O'DONNELL: You've spent your life, your career, taking care of — and providing care for women and babies. What has this Supreme Court decision done?

BERNARD: You know, this will affect our ability to take care of miscarriages. This will affect our ability to take care of complications in early pregnancy that could kill someone. This will affect our ability to provide infertility treatments, contraception. The list goes on.

O'DONNELL: How would you address concerns by conservatives or those with deeply held religious beliefs that abortion is immoral and wrong?

BERNARD: What I would say is if you don't believe that you would have an abortion, then don't have one. You cannot stop other people from accessing medical care that they need based on your personal religious beliefs.

O'DONNELL: And this is new tonight. Dr. Bernard told us that the Indiana attorney general has reached out to her and her lawyer for the first time today, nearly two weeks after saying he would investigate her. Dr. Bernard is also pursuing a defamation case against him.