



President Joe Biden's administration on Friday urged a judge to block a near-total ban on abortion imposed by Texas - the strictest such law in the nation - in a key moment in the ferocious legal fight over abortion access in the United States.

The U.S. [Supreme Court on Sept. 1](#) allowed the Republican-backed law to take effect even as litigation over its legality continues in lower courts. The U.S. Justice Department eight days later [sued in federal court](#) to try to invalidate it.

During a hearing in the Texas capital of Austin, Justice Department lawyers asked U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman to block the law temporarily, saying the state's Republican legislature and governor enacted it in an open defiance of the Constitution.

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