La. abortion laws voided, federal court ruling says

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A federal judge on Friday voided Louisiana's abortion laws, saying the state's longstanding ban on most abortions, including cases of rape and incest, violates women's constitutional rights.

The ruling, which was in response to a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) on behalf of Abortion Rights New Orleans and the Center for Reproductive Rights, said the state's law is unconstitutional and violates the U.S. Constitution's guarantees of personal privacy and freedom of religion.

"The Constitution guarantees women's access to legal and safe abortion services," said\n
William C. Ford Jr., a spokesperson for the ACLU.

On Friday, a federal judge in Louisiana ruled that the state's law, which bans most abortions, including those performed in cases of rape or incest, is unconstitutional.

The ruling comes after a years-long legal battle between the state and abortion rights advocates.

"We are pleased with the court's ruling and look forward to working with our partners to ensure that women in Louisiana have access to safe and legal abortion care," Ford said.

The Louisiana law, which was signed into law in 2016, bans most abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, except in cases of "jeopardy to the health of the woman" or fetal death. Abortion rights groups have long criticized the law as too restrictive and unconstitutional.

"It is a win for women's rights and a victory for the Constitution," said\n
Sandra Fluke, senior vice president of public affairs at Planned Parenthood.

The ACLU, which brought the lawsuit, argued that the law violates women's right to privacy and freedom of religion under the Constitution.

"The law is invalid because it restricts access to abortion and violated women's rights," Ford said.

The judge's ruling is likely to be appealed by the state, which has 20 days to do so.

"We are confident that the law will ultimately be upheld," said\n
Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry.

The Louisiana law was one of several strict abortion restrictions that have been challenged in recent years.

"It is clear that women's health care should be determined by doctors, not politicians," Ford said.

The ACLU has been a leading advocate for abortion rights for decades, and has won several major cases in the battle over women's reproductive rights.

"This is a significant victory for women's health and rights," said Fluke.