



NARAL
Pro-Choice Minnesota

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ELECTION 2008 RESULTS!
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Pro-Choice Minnesota News

A Publication of NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota and NARAL Pro-Choice Election Fund

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Now that the November 2008 election in the history books, we can reflect back upon our pro-choice victories and losses. In this issue you will find information about our work during this election season and our victories at nearly every level, all the way from the White House to the State House.

Barack Obama Elected President!

Pro-Choice Minnesotans spoke loud and clear on November 4th and overwhelmingly supported the fully pro-choice candidate Barack Obama.

After eight years of the Bush administration's attacks on reproductive rights, the nominations of extremely anti-choice Supreme Court Justices Alito and Roberts, and failed abstinence only sex education, the time for change has come. President-elect Obama has a proven track record of defending reproductive rights. He supports age appropriate sex education and he has the courage and wisdom to appoint Supreme Court Justices who will defend Roe v. Wade.

As Senator, Barack Obama was a sponsor of the Freedom of Choice Act. If passed into law, this act could override state level abortion bans and remove the threat of the Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade, and a women's right to reproductive privacy will be guaranteed.

Al Franken Senate Race Undecided

Due to an incredibly close Senate vote count, an automatic recount of all votes cast for U.S. Senate has begun. NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota endorsed candidate Al Franken is currently behind in the vote count by a little over 200 votes, out of the over 2.9 million votes cast. We will keep a close eye on this process and are hopeful for a pro-choice victory in the Senate race.

Abortion-related Bans and Ballot Measures defeated in Three States

Across the nation, there was a groundswell of support to defeat dangerous and deceptive anti-choice bans and ballot measures. In South Dakota, voters rejected Measure 11, the second abortion ban to be placed on the ballot in the last two years. In Colorado, Amendment 48, an extreme anti-choice ballot measure that would have outlawed abortion and threatened birth control and stem-cell research by establishing legal protections for fertilized eggs, was soundly defeated. And in California, Proposition 4, an extreme anti-choice ballot measure that would have jeopardized the safety of the state's most vulnerable teens, was also defeated by voters.

This election cycle has brought new energy and members into the electoral process. **At NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota, volunteers and staff knocked on over 9,000 doors and made over 19,000 phone calls, showing the power of our voices.** Our next goal must be to ensure that this energy does not dissipate and that we take advantage of the opportunity presented to us. We must all continue to raise our voices for choice as we fight for reproductive freedom.

Thank you for your past support of efforts at the ballot box and the State Capitol. A new chapter of our work is just beginning and I look forward to working with you in our new and challenging work.

Sincerely,

Linnea House



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NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota

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***The Abortion Provider Expansion Project (APEP) is a collaborative program between the NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Foundation and Pro-Choice Resources.**

Looking to the 2009 Legislative Session

The 2009 legislative session looks to be one of the most challenging for Minnesotans in some time as all projections to date predict that Minnesota we will have a large budget shortfall. Given that deficit and the current economic situation, much of the legislature's focus will be taken up by financial matters.

One of our main goals at NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota is to ensure that programs dealing with reproductive health are not adversely affected by budget concerns. We believe that one program that could be threatened by budget cuts will be funding for family planning services. With the state's financial situation, there is little doubt that Governor Pawlenty will try and cut services that are essential to preventing unintended pregnancies. Coupling that with the Governor's extremist anti-choice views, **it is possible that the Governor would attempt massive cuts to family planning** while using that money to ensure that the state continues to fund Crisis Pregnancy Centers through the Positive Alternatives program. One of our top legislative priorities at NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota will be to prevent vital family planning dollars being cut or redirected. **We will continue to fight for real measures that prevent unintended pregnancies.**

We also anticipate further debate on the healthcare reform initiatives started during the last legislative session. There are many organizations preparing for a major push to expand healthcare coverage for Minnesotans. **NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota is involved in these discussions and will fight to ensure that reproductive health continues to be covered under any form of healthcare reform.** We will stand up to any measures that would strip funding of reproductive health care from existing health program.

Finally, **we will fight any and all anti-choice amendments or bills brought forward by our anti-choice opponents.** We have been successful for the past two years in defeating all anti-choice efforts and will continue to be a strong advocate in protecting reproductive choice.

Minnesota 2008 Election Results

While we saw many pro-choice victories, the 2008 Election cycle has brought a few defeats. We fought many hard battles, and we lost some strong supporters along the way. But we were also able to elect several strong new voices who we believe will carry the torch for choice. **In the end, the Minnesota House is still a mixed-choice body.**

Overall, NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota endorsed 76 candidates, and 62 of them were elected. That is an 82% success rate! Among these legislators are six new pro-choice representatives. In 2009, we welcome to the State House of Representatives:

- Gail Kulick Jackson (DFL - 16A)
- Mike Obermueller (DFL - 38B)
- Paul Rosenthal (DFL - 41B)
- Jerry Newton (DFL - 49B)
- Bobby Joe Champion (DFL - 58B)
- Jeffrey Hayden (DFL - 61B)

We look forward to working with these individuals and all others who support choice in Minnesota.

The excitement of these victories has somewhat been dampened by the losses of four strong supporters of choice:

- Sandy Wollschlager (DFL - 28A)
- Ken Tschumper (DFL - 31B)
- Shelley Madore (DFL - 37A)
- Ron Erhardt (R - 41A)

From the bottoms of our hearts, we at NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota thank these legislators for their hard work. These legislators were some of the cause's strongest supporters and they will be greatly missed. **We would like to say a special thank you to Ron Erhardt, who had been a strong advocate for choice for 18 years in the Minnesota House of Representatives.** He was the last pro-choice Republican in the legislature. His strong principles and courage will lead a void in the legislature that cannot easily be filled.



Elect NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Board of Directors

Thought your last chance to vote for pro-choice leaders was on November 4?

As a member of NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota, you have one more opportunity to elect new and returning leaders of our organization. Please read about our candidates and cast your vote. Ballots can be found on the return envelope included in this newsletter. Please return your ballot to our office by December 31, 2008. It is also a good time to renew your membership for 2009!

Holly Davis - seeking 2nd term

I am a strong supporter of reproductive freedom for all women and have been a board member of NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota for two years. I am actively involved in fundraising and recruiting new board members. Serving on the Board of Directors allows me to use my 25 years of business experience and political involvement to help NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota fulfill its mission.

Erin Ghere - seeking 3rd term

I have served two terms on the NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Board. I am seeking re-election. During my time on the board, I served as Treasurer for two years and have sat on the Executive Committee for the past three years. My board service has been a great outlet for my passion about women's rights and our right to privacy. I also enjoy contributing my communications and political/electoral background to a great organization.

Matthew Healy - seeking 1st term

NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota provided me with a great first political activist experience. That experience has evolved to the point now where my professional life as a medical student will intersect with this focal point in my political and personal beliefs. I believe that NARAL is one of the prime movers in expanding access to abortion and contraceptive services as well as addressing sex education issues in the state of Minnesota at the policy level and in terms of hearts and minds. Serving on the Board is an exciting challenge for me to work on this issue area at another level.

Kim Johnson - seeking 3rd term

It has been an honor on the NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Board of Directors for the past four years and I look forward to leading the organization into its next two years. I have seen the organization grow and change and I am energized by the continued support of Minnesotans for continuing to protect reproductive choice.

Judy Kralewski - seeking 1st term

I have always been a strong supporter for not only women's reproductive rights but also for comprehensive health education for all ages; ensuring access to both information and care for all. I am a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner and have worked for many years in public health

settings. I have provided healthcare for many adolescents which included reproductive care. I appreciate being able to offer them all healthcare options when necessary. I now want to help ensure that I will continue to be able to offer them all available choices when making decisions about their health. I feel my clinical experience would be a valuable addition to the Board and look forward to working with others toward a common goal.

Vanessa Martin - seeking 2nd term

I have been active in the pro-choice community as a staff member, board member and volunteer for many years. Protecting and advocating for women's reproductive rights is very important to me. To me, being a board member means serving and providing direction for the staff, volunteers, and members of this great organization to help further women's reproductive rights in Minnesota. As a former NARAL affiliate staffer, and as a law student I think I bring a unique perspective to the board. I am proud to have served on the NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota board for the past two years and I look forward to continuing my service for the next two years.

Robin Martinek - seeking 3rd term

I have long been involved in supporting and electing pro-choice candidates and my tenure on the Board of Directors has allowed me to get involved on another level. I have enjoyed my past four years on the board and look forward to serving the organization for another two years.

Barbara McGee - seeking 1st term

I am a supporter of NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota. For many years I have believed and fought for ensuring reproductive freedom for all women. It is something that I am passionate about. Serving on the Board of Directors will allow me to help NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota fulfill its mission to ensure these rights continue in Minnesota, and I look forward to using my financial management skills to bring the organization into its next chapter.

Krista Twesme - seeking 1st term

Participation on the NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Board would offer me the opportunity to participate in an organization that is not only committed to a personal issue I care deeply about (a woman's right to safe and legal abortion), but to ensuring that we elect the right political leaders. I could contribute in a meaningful way to the ongoing success of the organization, and welcome the opportunity to serve Minnesotans in a board member capacity.

Organizing Voters on Minnesota Campuses

During the first two months of the school year on campuses throughout the state, NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota campus representatives were busy getting new and young voters to vote pro-choice!

Our student leaders on 16 campuses throughout the state:

- Conducted 39 election education trainings
- Registered 398 voters
- Submitted 11 letters to the editor to their school papers, and 9 were published
- Coordinated 21 Get Out the Vote activities
- Planned four "Get Out the Pro-Choice Vote" visibility activities
- Distributed same day voter registration education to 2650 potential new voters
- Held 21 candidate specific election phone banks, lit drops and tabling activities

NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota runs one of the largest and most effective campus programs in the United States. We organize on campuses through out the state and are building the next generation of pro-choice leaders. Our campuses include: Carleton College, Gustavus Adolphus College, Hamline University, Macalester College, Minnesota State University - Mankato, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Metropolitan State University, Minnesota State University- Bemidji, Minnesota State University - Moorhead, Minnesota State University - Saint Cloud , Rochester Community and Technical College, Saint Olaf College, the University of Minnesota - Duluth, the University of Minnesota - Morris, the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, and Minnesota State University - Winona.



NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota's Canvass and their Vital Role in Election 2008

NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota played a key role in the U.S. Senate race this year. Our phone canvassers made approximately 12,000 dials to our members and three pro-choice Franken mail pieces were sent to approximately 6,000 members. Throughout the program, we were able to have conversations with our members about supporting the best candidate for choice. We had an impact on this race, and considering how close it is, this race may have been an outright loss without our work.

At the state level, our field canvassers knocked on over 2,000 doors in House Districts 16A and 49B. Our efforts resulted in the election of new pro-choice legislators Gail Kulick Jackson and Representative Jerry Newton.

The phone canvassers dialed almost 1,600 NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota members into House Districts 41B and 53A. Our efforts resulted in the election of new pro-choice legislator Paul Rosenthal and the reelection of Paul Gardner.

Overall, NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota volunteers and staff knocked on over 9,000 doors and made over 19,000 phone calls, showing the power of our voices. Our next goal must be to ensure that this energy does not dissipate and that we take advantage of the opportunity presented to us. We must all continue to raise our voices for choice as we fight for reproductive freedom.

UPCOMING PRO-CHOICE EVENTS

Thursday, January 22, 2009

Please join us to commemorate the 36th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court ruling that guaranteed a woman's right to choose. The Minnesota Choice Coalition will once again host an event to honor this day, and invite you to join us as we kick off a new pro-choice visibility project.

Where: Bev's Wine Bar, located in Warehouse District of Minneapolis

When: Thursday, January 22, 2009, 5-7 pm Cost: \$25

Look for more information from us about this event in your mailboxes soon, or check out the MN Choice Coalition website at www.mnchoicecoalition.org.

The mission of the Minnesota Choice Coalition is to bring together the pro-choice organizations in our state to work collaboratively in expanding and sustaining a pro-choice movement. Coalition members are: Midwest Health Center for Women, Minnesota Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Minnesota NOW, NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota Foundation, National Council of Jewish Women- Minnesota Chapter, Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Pro-Choice Resources.

Wednesday, March 25th, 2009- Pro-Choice Lobby Day

Come be a part of history at the State Capitol and Raise your Voice for Choice at our Annual Pro-Choice Lobby Day. It's a day you won't want to miss!

For more information, or to have your organization join our Pro-Choice Lobby Day Coalition, please go to www.prochoiceminnesota.org/oncampus/lobbyday.

