



CHOICE Newsline

Monthly Publication of Minnesota NARAL and Minnesota NARAL Foundation, affiliate of NARAL Pro-Choice America

April 2003

Legislative Update

In today's political climate, where opposition to reproductive freedom and choice is as strong as at any time since *Roe v. Wade*, the staff and volunteers of Minnesota NARAL are working diligently to protect choice. And yet, our work would mean nothing if it weren't for your generosity. Without your support we couldn't be the force that we are. Thank you.

As promised, the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL) have unleashed their most extensive assault on choice in recent memory. With their allies holding overwhelming majorities in both bodies of the legislature, the eight registered lobbyists of the MCCL are introducing bills so quickly it is difficult to keep track. Here are some of the highlights so far:

HEROES...

- **Sen. Mee Moua** and **Rep. Jim Davnie** for introducing a bill that reestablishes comprehensive sexual health education as the standard for HIV/STD prevention curriculum in schools.
- **Sen. Sandy Pappas** and **Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher** for steering legislation that requires hospital emergency rooms to offer emergency contraception to survivors of sexual assault. Passed by Senate Health and Family Security Committee, March 13 !
- **Sen. Ellen Anderson** and **Rep. Tom Huntley** for introducing a bill requiring health insurers to cover the FDA approved contraceptives to the same degree that they cover other pharmaceuticals. Passed by Senate Health and Family Security Committee, March 13 !
- **U.S. Senator Mark Dayton** for defending women's access to reproductive health care by voting against the deceptive, dangerous and unconstitutional 'partial-birth' abortion ban and for voting to approve a package of pregnancy prevention measures (1) requiring contraceptive equity in insurance plans; (2) improving access to emergency contraception; and (3) promoting healthy childbearing by expanding health care coverage for pregnant women.

ZEROS ...

- **The eight lobbyists of the MCCL** for introducing more than 20 anti-choice bills including their two legislative priorities: the so-called 'Woman's Right to Know' and 'Super Gag Rule.'
- **To the anti-choice members of the House Health and Human Services Policy Committee** who, during a hearing on the so-called 'Woman's Right to Know' bill, defeated an amendment that would have allowed rape survivors the option of forgoing the trauma of being read the MCCL's state-scripted speech that states that "the father of the unborn child is liable for child support" before they can terminate their pregnancy.
- **U.S. Senator Norm Coleman** who voted for the deceptive, dangerous and unconstitutional 'partial-birth' abortion ban and against the prevention package Sen. Dayton voted for (see list in left column). Coleman also voted against *Roe v. Wade* in a "nonbinding" resolution reaffirming the Senate's support for *Roe v. Wade* expressing "the sense of the Senate that the decision of the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade* was appropriate and secures an important constitutional right" and that the ruling "should not be overturned." Shame on you Norman!



The Future of the Pro-Choice Movement is Here!

Student Day of Action a Outstanding Success

On Monday, February 24, nearly 70 students from 20 schools in Minnesota came to Saint Paul to participate in Minnesota NARAL's Student Day of Action. Activities from the day included:

- Touring area abortion clinics to learn more about the abortion experience
- Visiting the capitol building with pro-choice lobbyists
- Attending legislative briefings on current choice-related legislation in Minnesota
- Holding a student-led press conference
- Hearing from pro-choice Rep. Katie Sieben (DFL, Newport)

THE CLINIC TOURS PROVED TO BE A VERY EDUCATIONAL AND VALUABLE EXPERIENCE for students. Many students found that it was an important step in "demystifying" the abortion experience in their own minds. It was also very useful for them to see what women experience on the day of their appointment, from possible clinic protesters to long waits due to a shortage of doctors willing to perform abortions. Hearing about the counseling each woman receives and the informed consent that she gives for the procedure also helped students understand even more why the proposed 24-hour waiting period in Minnesota is both unnecessary and insulting to women.

THE STUDENT-LED PRESS CONFERENCE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS! It was attended by several pro-choice legislators who showed their support for the students, several local and statewide media sources. The students were featured on Minnesota Public Radio and in several campus papers. At the press conference, students voiced their opposition to potential gag rules on family planning funding. Students also talked about the importance of supporting legislation that would guarantee emergency contraception in emergency rooms for survivors of sexual assault.

So many times we hear that young people are apathetic. We are happy to report in Minnesota, there are energized young activists who are engaged in the fight to protect reproductive rights.

THE FUTURE OF REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IS CERTAINLY IN GOOD HANDS!



Choice Celebrations

A Time to Celebrate with Friends and Peers

Here in Minnesota and across the country, hundreds of members and volunteers are busy planning events in their homes and communities for April 30, 2003. Thousands of pro-choice Americans will attend these events to celebrate the 30th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* and help kick-off our Mobilization to Protect Choice. If you are interested in a future Choice Celebrations date, contact Janet at Minnesota NARAL at 651-602-7655.



ECm in n esota .o rg

Have you heard about it?

This website was developed to give people a chance to take action to support the "Emergency Care for Sexual Assault Victims Act."

This bill would require hospital emergency rooms to provide emergency contraception ("morning-after" pill) to survivors of sexual assault to prevent pregnancy.

Problem: 50% of Minnesota hospitals do not provide access to EC for survivors of sexual assault. (Minnesota NARAL Foundation survey 2000, 2001)

Take one minute to make a difference. Sign our petition at www.ecminnesota.org today!

Minnesota NARAL Wish List:

- Scanner
- Digital Camera
- Copy Machine
- Fax Machine
- with blast capabilities*
- Adobe Acrobat
- Paint Shop Pro
- Color Laser Printer
- Pocket Folders & Files
- Blank Video Tapes
- Extra Copies of Choice Related Videos such as *If These Walls Could Talk*

If you would like to donate one of these items please contact the office at 651-602-7655 or email us at info@mnnaral.org. Thank you!

Minnesota NARAL

an affiliate of
NARAL Pro-Choice America

Yes, I want to become a
Sustaining Member of
Minnesota NARAL!

I will make a

Monthly _____

Quarterly _____

Donation of

\$ _____

\$25

\$20

\$15

\$10

\$5

Please fill out credit card
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I Want to Help Secure Choice in Minnesota!

Enclosed is my contribution of:

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| \$1,000 | Council of Trustees |
| \$500 | Blackmun Circle |
| \$250 | Sponsor |
| \$100 | Pacesetter |
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| \$35 | Member |
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Because of our aggressive advocacy work, contributions to Minnesota NARAL are not tax deductible.

April03



Volunteers of the Month Central Minnesota Citizens for Choice

Central Minnesota Citizens for Choice (CMCC) is an all-volunteer group of women and men from the Saint Cloud area committed to giving a voice to the pro-choice community of the region. They are proactive in the on-going struggle to maintain basic reproductive rights, and impact change in their community.

The group is dedicated to hosting educational events that inspire people to take action, producing materials on pregnancy prevention options, writing letters to the editor, and providing a safe forum for pro-choice supporters.

"It's really hard being pro-choice in central Minnesota," Karen Langsjoen remarked. "We're the most anti-choice area in Minnesota and one of the most in the country. Our group formed to let people know that there are others out there that support choice and are not afraid to say so." Mark Schlemmer says his motivation comes from his "deep belief that individuals can and should make their own moral decisions, coupled with a disgust for how anti-choice activists use violence, intimidation and lies."

Minnesota NARAL thanks CMCC for all they do for reproductive rights! We appreciate their dedication to choice in the anti-choice stronghold that exists in their area.

For more information about CMCC, email citizensforchoice@yahoo.com or call Minnesota NARAL at (651) 602-7655. If you live in Brainerd, contact CMCC's sister group, Brainerd Friends for Choice, at friendsforchoice@yahoo.com. Are you inspired to form an pro-choice team in your area? Please contact us!



Save the Date!
6th Annual Wine and Beer Tasting
at Cafe Barbette
May 12, 2003 6:00-8:00 p.m.

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