



National Organization for Women Arizona State Newsletter January 2012

AZ NOW CONTACTS:

**State Policy/
Spokesperson**
Karen Van Hooft
kvhnow2@cox.net

**Phoenix/Scottsdale
Chapter**
Karen Kondej
kondej@cox.net

**Sun Cities/West Valley
Chapter**
Jodie Lawrosky
jtlawrosky@gmail.com
Mary Knudson
marykinaz1@q.com

East Valley Chapter
Karen Van Hooft
kvhnow2@cox.net

Newsletter Editor
Sheila Ogea
sogea@cox.net

STATE & CHAPTER WEBSITES:

aznow.org
phxscottsdalenow.org
aznow-scwv.org

New Abortion Restrictions Limit Access to Reproductive Health Care in Arizona

by Karen Van Hooft

This year has been a disastrous one for reproductive rights and women's health care in general in Arizona. During its 2011 session the state legislature passed, and Governor Brewer signed, significant new abortion restrictions, and later in the year the Arizona Court of Appeals rejected a challenge to earlier restrictions passed in 2009.

On August 11, 2011, the appellate court overturned an injunction issued in 2009 that blocked key provisions of that year's legislation. In mid-September Planned Parenthood of Arizona (PPAZ) made the difficult decision to not appeal the case to the Arizona Supreme Court, citing the need "to focus its resources right now on its core mission of health care" as well as indications that the chances of success in an appeal were not strong. As a result, the following restrictions took effect:

- Women are now required to meet *in-person* with a *physician* to listen to a state-mandated script of information 24 hours in advance of an abortion procedure. Previously, qualified staff members could provide the information over the phone.

See **Restrictions** (Continued on page 2)

The U.S. House of Representatives does it again! H.R. 358, the "Let Women Die Act," passes the House

by Olga Vives

On October 13, 2011, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 358, the so called "Protect Life Act." The National Organization for Women prefers to call it the "Let Women Die Act." The law amends the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the health care law enacted by Congress, to prohibit federal funds from being used for any part of any plan that provides coverage for abortion care. In addition, it allows hospitals to refuse to provide or even refer a patient for abortion care, even if doing so would cause a woman to die.

Rep. Joe Pitts, R-PA, sponsor of this terrible legislation, having failed to win votes for the Stupak-Pitts amendment to the ACA, which would have prohibited the use of federal funds for abortion services just as the new bill does, is determined to make it impossible for a woman to access abortion care. This new stand-alone bill is his latest attempt to deny women access to abortion services under the ACA.

H.R. 358 is a radical departure from current law. It does not simply restate the deeply unjust, discriminatory, and longstanding ban on federal

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Restrictions (Continued from page 1)

- Minors must now get a *notarized* statement of parental consent in order to get an abortion. Previously, notarization was not required.
- Pharmacists and other health-care professionals are now allowed to decline to provide information about or access to abortion, emergency contraception, or birth control due to their personal beliefs.
- Only physicians are allowed to perform early surgical abortions. Trained nurse practitioners are now banned from performing this procedure.

The additional restrictions passed in 2011, which PPAZ is continuing to challenge in the courts, include provisions that redefine taking the abortion pill as surgery, thereby prohibiting nurse practitioners from providing abortion-by-pill (medical abortion), which was the only form of abortion available outside of Phoenix and Tucson.

With Arizona already experiencing a serious shortage of doctors trained to provide abortion care, these new barriers have had dire results: Planned Parenthood has been forced to discontinue such care in six communities, leaving only the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas with abortion services. (All PPAZ health centers still provide family planning and other preventive services.)

Taken together, the 2009 and 2011 restrictions impose severe burdens on Arizona women, particularly those residing in areas of the state where no abortion provider is available. Such women must now travel to Phoenix or Tucson for the required informational meeting with a physician and then either make the same trip the next day for the procedure or go through the added time and expense of staying overnight. Many may not be able to afford the additional cost of travel, lost wages, and accommodations on top of the cost of the procedure. Minors have the additional complication of having to provide a parental consent form that must be notarized. And women in general are experiencing increasing difficulty obtaining referrals for abortion, emergency contraception, and even birth control due to the “conscience” provisions of the legislation.

PPAZ has indicated that it will closely monitor the impact of these new restrictions on women’s ability to access safe, legal reproductive health care in order to gather evidence related to how these restrictions harm women for possible future litigation.

What you can do:

- Check the “legislative scorecard” on PPAZ’s website (www.plannedparenthood.org/ppaz/) to see how your legislators voted on these and related bills, and then work to defeat those who voted for these harmful restrictions.
- Contact us through our AZ NOW website (<http://aznow.org/>) if you or someone you know is adversely affected by any of the new restrictions on reproductive health care.

The preceding was culled from information appearing in The Arizona Republic and in emails from Planned Parenthood of Arizona.

H.R. 358 (Continued from page 1)

funding for abortion care embodied in the Hyde Amendment, but it also applies restrictions on private dollars exchanged between individuals and private, profit-driven insurance companies. In addition, it allows for health care providers to refuse training for, performance of, or even referrals for abortion care under ANY circumstances, including a woman under imminent threat of death in an emergency room, and it requires the Department of Health and Human Services to create a formal procedure to investigate violations. In other words, the bill lets women die.

The legislation has now been referred to the Committee on Finance in the Senate, where hopefully it will not see the light of day. Fortunately, we have a pro-choice president who has promised to veto the bill if it ever comes to his desk. However, the Republicans in Congress continue to press for anti-reproductive rights bills such as this one and, absent a friend in the White House and a pro-choice Senate, they will succeed at some point. This is why it is often said that elections, at all levels, have consequences.

The bill passed with 251 YES votes, 172 NO votes and 10 members not voting. The breakdown was as follows:

Republicans YES = 236, Democrats YES = 15,
Republicans NO = 2, Democrats NO = 170, Republicans Not Voting = 7, Democrats Not Voting = 3.

The Arizona Congressional delegation voted as follows:

YES – Flake (CD-6), Franks (CD-2), Gosar (CD-1),
Quayle (CD-3), and Schweikert (CD-5)
NO – Grijalva (CD-7) and Pastor (CD-4)
Not Voting – Giffords (CD-8)

() This article adapted from the National Organization for Women Action Alert of October 12, 2011*

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

Phoenix/Scottsdale NOW Celebrates Equality Day

Phoenix/Scottsdale NOW members and other vibrant community feminists gathered on August 26, 2011, to toast and celebrate the 91st anniversary of Women's Suffrage. The long, treacherous, courageous battle to win the vote for women culminated on this day in 1920 with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In 1971, the U.S. Congress designated August 26th as Women's Equality Day to commemorate passage of the amendment and to honor women's continuing efforts toward equality.

The evening began with board members of Phoenix/Scottsdale NOW reading from the podium President Obama's 2011 proclamation. Two videos followed: *Equality, I Am Woman*, and *One Fine Day*. There was a contest to name the historical feminists shown in *One Fine Day*. Clemene Hawes won the contest with the most correct answers. The prize was a beautiful framed photo of mother and child taken by Olga Tsoudis on her visit to Nepal.

Personal, broad ranging, funky, angry and sad, women (and men) took their five-minute turns at the podium—a tonic for our continuing efforts to claim our space, our rights, and our voices. We shared poetry, prose, song and theory. The feminist movement was renewed.

Phoenix/Scottsdale NOW extends our thanks and warm embrace to all who contributed to this empowering evening and a special thanks to our foremothers who fought tirelessly and brilliantly to make our lives count. We will see you next year on August 26th as we continue our passage toward equality.

Karen Kondej—President, Phoenix/Scottsdale NOW

Sun Cities/West Valley Chapter

We've had two chapter meetings and our biannual book club meeting since the summer break. In October we celebrated the return to the Valley of the Sun by presenting our Golden Apple award to Dianne Post, an inspired lawyer who has taken her skills far and wide, including to Kenya with the United Nations, where she developed a manual for prosecutors on sexual and gender-based violence. We also participated in the Occupy Phoenix protest on

October 15th. (No members were arrested!)

In November, we were joined by State Representative Lela Alston, who shared with us her unique perspective on the Arizona Legislature and on state politics in general. Also, prior to our November meeting, our Book Club met to discuss *All That is Bitter & Sweet* by Ashley Judd.

Save the date!!! Our chapter's annual Women's History Month event is set for March 10, 2012, from 2-4 p.m. at the Unitarian-Universalist Church in Surprise, AZ. The topic for this year's event is Women Spies! Hope you can sneak on over and see it! Bring a friend! More information on tickets will appear on our website: <http://aznow-scvv.org>

Jodie Lawrosky—Co-Coordinator, NOW-Sun Cities/West Valley

East Valley Chapter

The East Valley Chapter will be scheduling an elections meeting in January 2012. Watch for date announcement.

Save a Tree!

If you received this newsletter in the mail, send your email address to Sheila at sogea@cox.net so we can send you future issues electronically.



Celebrating Women's Equality Day!



Here's a great gift idea!

Give a NOW membership to your favorite feminist!

The National Organization for Women is the largest feminist organization in the country. Since 1966, NOW's goal has been "to take action" to bring about equality for all women. Arizona NOW activists use both traditional and non-traditional means to push for social change. In addition to electoral and lobbying work, we organize marches, pickets, responsive "zap" actions, and organize many events to celebrate and call attention to our issues.

Today you can give a gift membership to Arizona NOW, so that we can continue the work for women's rights. Give a gift that keeps on giving all year long and show your support for NOW. Our goal is to have one hundred new memberships by 2012.

GIVE THE SECTION BELOW TO THE NEW MEMBER

December 2011
Dear _____:
This year, I am more committed than ever to make a difference and make change. NOW has a vision for a feminist future. NOW has worked tirelessly for women's equality. As the country looks forward to a promising future for economic security and better healthcare, NOW will be there to hold public officials accountable.
I am giving you a gift membership to the National Organization for Women because I know you want to join me in supporting this outstanding organization. NOW will send a membership card directly to you.
For equality,
By (your name) _____

Send this Section to Arizona NOW

Below is the name of the person I am giving a GIFT MEMBERSHIP to. S/he is aware of and supports NOW's statement of purpose to take action in the next wave of the Women's Movement to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society, to see equal representation of women in the legislature, and to end discrimination and violence against women.

Donor name _____
New Member Name (please print) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (_____) _____ Cell (_____) _____
Email _____

National, State and Local Dues:

- \$40 Regular Dues
\$16 - \$30 Reduced Dues

Mail to: Arizona NOW, c/o P/S NOW

PO Box 3514
Scottsdale, AZ 85271-3514