

Make a Difference Today - Macomb County NOW

ACTION ALERT ~~~ Stand Up for Women

Following the U.S. Supreme Court's regressive ruling on April 18 in two abortion ban cases, women's rights supporters in Congress have introduced the *Freedom of Choice Act* (FOCA). If enacted, this legislation would override the Court's decision in which the court upheld two bans that could prohibit the most commonly used and safest abortion procedures after 12 weeks of pregnancy. In their rulings, the justices also effectively overruled the requirement that legislative restrictions on abortion must contain an exception to protect the woman's health. Furthermore, the Supreme Court, on April 23 directed the lower courts to review ear-

lier decisions that had overturned state abortion laws that lacked the exception to protect the health of the woman.

The *Freedom of Choice Act*, if adopted into law, would restore the reproductive rights recognized in 1973 before Congress, state legislatures and courts eroded these rights. Once enacted, FOCA would protect a woman's right to an abortion by federal statute even if *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned by the Supreme Court. This means that FOCA will prohibit states from interference with a woman's right to an abortion prior to the point of viability. As un-

der *Roe*, states will be able to prohibit abortion after viability, unless necessary to protect the woman's life or health.

Senator Debbie Stabenow is a co-sponsor of FOCA; however, Senator Carl

Levin is not. Only Representative John Conyers is a Michigan co-sponsor.

Learn what you can do. Go to www.now.org Action Alerts.



Who can forget this scene when Bush signed the abortion procedure ban?

YES, count me in! I want to join NOW to help secure equality and fair treatment for all women.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Email Address _____ Daytime Phone _____

Regular Annual Dues: \$40 for MI residents. Two years dues: \$75 Three years dues: \$110
 Reduced Annual Dues: Sliding scale available from \$15 to \$34.
 Lifetime Membership: \$1000

Regular Dues Lifetime Membership I am already a member, but would like to contribute a gift of \$ _____

My check is enclosed for \$ _____. (Please make checks payable to Macomb County NOW)

Please mail your check with this form to: Michigan NOW Membership Processing
 40788 Executive Drive
 Sterling Heights, MI 48313

Contributions to NOW are not tax deductible because of our grassroots lobbying work. NOW is a non-profit, tax-exempt membership organization working politically and legislatively to advance women's rights.



Macomb County NOW Times

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Macomb NOW Executive Board

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Fast Forward >> Women Take Charge

If you check out the www.now.org website for the NOW National Conference, you'll be astonished. There is a dizzying array of activities, including the Young Feminist Leadership Institute, the Political Institute, and breakout sessions on every feminist topic you can imagine. Macomb NOW is very proud of members—Rebecca Malotke-Meslin and Sarah Roberts—who are featured breakout session panelists.

Workshops are of the highest quality, with nationally known experts, such as Michigan's NOW President Renee Beeker, who will conduct the session,

"Women Victimized in Family Court." Governor Granholm, Detroit Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick, and former U.S. Senator Carol Moseley Braun are among the impressive list of speakers.

Nationally known celebrities who will be making appearances include: Sherry Stringfield (Dr. Susan Lewis on *ER*); Jill Soloway, writer and co-executive producer of HBO's *Six Feet Under*; acclaimed author of *Soledad* and *Let It Rain Coffee*, Angie Cruz; and, Olympic gold medalist, Benita Fitzgerald Mosley.

As if that weren't enough, there is entertainment, too. Friday night features Robin Tyler's one woman show, *Always a Bride-maid, Never a Groom*, a hilarious, multi-media romp through LGBT history. Entertainment on Saturday is provided by Silent Violet (Miriam McCarthy), writer and performer. Throughout the conference various feminist flicks are being shown, including *Shut Up and Sing!*, a documentary about the Dixie Chicks.

Don't miss it! Register on line by July 5th.



Young Feminist Leadership Institute

Young Feminists are in for a treat at this summer's NOW conference in Dearborn. The Young Feminist Leadership Institute is a special selection of workshops and roundtable discussions within the traditional conference pro-

gram. It is designed to inspire and train young feminists to pursue leadership positions within NOW. Attendees will learn about building allies with other organizations and grassroots organizing skills. They will also

meet young women elected officials - including our own Macomb County Commissioner Sarah Roberts - who will discuss their roles in public office. At the end of the conference, participants will receive a certificate,



not to mention an arsenal of NOW feminist knowledge.

Message From the President

Cyndy Kelly

"Remember Chicago", impassioned speeches by Robert Kennedy and Jesse Jackson, demonstrating...I was riveted for a summer to the stage of the national political conventions during the summer of 1968. This exposure ignited my interest in politics and women's rights. I fashioned an image of myself as the first woman president.

No one told me I could not find any dream I set out to fulfill.

As a strong student in all subjects including math and the sciences, there were many careers I investigated growing up. During parent-teacher conferences, the principal of our high school spoke to my mother regarding her bright, intelli-

gent and socially adept daughter. He told her that he thought I would be particularly well suited in a position as an executive secretary. My mother being polite told him she thought I was suited for greater things than that!

Though these events took place nearly forty years ago, we still face

many of the same issues today. I hope to continue the work that began so long ago...to advance the status and quality of women's lives and their families. I invite you to attend one or all of our events this upcoming year. It is an exciting time in Macomb County and I am pleased and honored to be your Macomb County NOW president.

"Gag Rule" and EC Ban Continue at Health Dept.

Macomb County Health Department Family Health Division provides a wide array of reproductive health education, counseling, and information about contraceptive methods and management, including pregnancy tests, pelvic and breast exams and a variety of birth control supplies. These services are available to children, teens and adults (no age restrictions), with most services used by the age group from 20-29. Fees are determined by a sliding scale based on income with 75% of their clients at or below poverty levels. In a recent interview with Michael Parent, Division Director, he articulated the mission of the Family Health is to provide a full range of family planning services and referrals, by highly qualified professional staff, at a reasonable cost.

Regrettably, from NOW's point of view, the fully range of services includes neither counseling for women seeking information about abortion nor for emergency contraception. Known as the "gag rule," a policy was passed by the Macomb County Board of Commissioner in 1991 that prohibits the use of public funds "for the purpose of counseling or encouraging a woman to have an abortion not necessary to save her life," effectively banning any county employee from counseling a client on this matter.

Furthermore, then commissioner Leon Drolet, introduced a resolution that was passed by the Macomb County Board of Commissioner in 1999 that states, "... County employees and/or individuals acting as agents for or on behalf of the County shall not provide or proscribe (sic) any device, substance or drug with the intention of, or which has been shown to substantially act to, abort a human embryo or prevent development of a fertilized human egg."

If women in this county, especially those with limited incomes, are to receive the benefit of a "full range of family planning services," these prohibitive policies must be addressed through the enlightened leadership of our elected officials. Let your county commissioner know your position on these issues. County commissioners' email addresses can be found at www.macombcountymi.gov.

For more information about the Family Planning Program at the Health Department, go to www.macombcountymi.gov/publichealth/ and enter Family Planning in the search box.

You Can Help Domestic Violence Victims



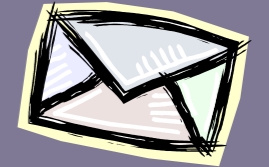
When you read a disturbing news story about battered and abused women do you wish you could help? You will soon have the opportunity to do so.

This chapter is initiating a direct mail fundraiser for Lakeshore

Legal Aid, a non-profit law firm which works with Turning Point. Lakeshore is the only legal aid available in Macomb County for domestic violence survivors. Funding losses have cut the staff and forced them to reduce services. Please help

Lakeshore Legal Aide continue its crucial work.

Look for the letter in your mail later this



Planned Parenthood Programs and Services

Planned Parenthood of Southeast Michigan (PPSM) is an option available for family planning services that provides both comprehensive health care and educational programs—"the name you trust for the answers you need!" Among the health services avail-

able are most birth control methods and counseling, emergency contraception, pregnancy testing and counseling, annual check-ups (pelvic, breast, and Pap smears), STI testing and treatment, HIV testing and counseling, referrals for prenatal

care, adoption, and abortion. Educational programs include teen pregnancy prevention, STI/HIV/AIDs prevention, birth control methods, healthy relationships, and parent-child sexuality community. No patient is turned away because of an inability to pay.

Fees are determined on a sliding scale based on the patient's ability to pay. Most insurances are accepted, including Medicaid. The PPSM office for Macomb County, Sanger Center, is located at 25932 Dequindre, Warren, 48091. 586-758-2100.

Calendar of Events ~~~ Summer, 2007

- July 13-15 **National NOW Conference**, Dearborn Hyatt Regency Hotel
- Aug 7 **PRIMARY ELECTION DAY**, 7:00 am—8:00 pm
- Aug 15 **ANNUAL MINIATURE GOLF OUTING FUNDRAISER FOR PAUL GIELEGHEM**
- Aug 27 **Women's Equality Day**, 5:30-8:30 pm, sponsored by Detroit NOW. For details, contact Jacquie Steingold, steingoldj@sbcglobal.net.
- Sept 8 **Michigan Policy Summit 2007: Shaping a Progressive Agenda**, **FRIDAY NIGHT BINGO** at the brand new Metro-Garfield Bingo Hall (Garfield, just south of Metro Parkway). Doors open at 4:30. Bingo starts at 6:30. Proceeds go to the Macomb County Democratic Committee. Check it out!

Looking Ahead

- Sept 23 **Michigan NOW State Coordinating Committee (SCC) meeting**
- Oct 17 **Love Your Body Day** (Look for details in next newsletter)
- Oct 18 **Remember My Name**, 6:00pm at Mt. Calvary Community Center, Warren, sponsored by Turning Point
- Oct 19 **Macomb Community Domestic Violence Council Conference**, day-long at Macomb Intermediate School District
- Oct 25-27 **Women of Color and Allies Summit**, Cleveland State University.