



**NARAL
PRO-CHOICE COLORADO**



**Constituent Lobbyist Training
2009**

**NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado
2009 Constituent Lobbyist Training**

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Dear NARAL Pro Choice Colorado Supporter,

Thank you for being a part of our 2009 Constituent Lobby Network!

2008 was an exciting year for choice. Not only did we maintain pro-choice majorities in both chambers of the General Assembly, Coloradans also **soundly rejected Amendment 48**, the so-called “personhood amendment” by a **3-1 margin**, sending the clear message that Coloradans are tired of divisive attacks on choice.

Riding on our victories, 2009 looks to be an exciting year in the legislative session. We are in a strong position to build on our pro-choice successes and make huge strides towards reducing unintended pregnancy in Colorado. Your participation is vital in this effort, since it is YOU who holds the power. When you speak, your legislators listen and we need every voice possible emphasizing the importance of reproductive health care and denouncing anti-choice attacks. Anti-choice lawmakers have already made it clear that they will continue attacking women’s reproductive rights. **Your participation is critical to stop harmful anti-choice measures and pass pro-choice bills.** Your successes in the 2007 and 2008 legislative sessions prove how effective you are.

Want to take the next step? There are many ways to increase your participation at the Capitol. If you are interested in any of the following, please contact me at 303-394-1973 ext. 15 or email kstearns@prochoicecolorado.org.

- 1) Attend a celebration to commemorate our victory over Amendment 48 and the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*** – Save the date for Friday, January 23rd from 5:30-7:30 as the members of the Protect Families Protect Choice coalition responsible for defeating Amendment 48 gather to celebrate our successes and hear from featured speaker Sarah Weddington, the notable lawyer who won *Roe* in 1973.
- 2) Attend Pro-Choice Lobby Day at the Capitol** – Join us on Thursday, February 26 to get hands-on training about how the legislative process works and see your legislators in action. Travel to the Capitol to participate in volunteer lobbying, urging legislators to support prevention in reproductive health care policy.
- 3) Participate in our “Voices for Choice: Lunch ’n’ Learn” monthly conference call series:** Stay in the know about important issues by participating in this monthly call series. Hear from influential voices from around the nation as they speak about a variety of issues concerning reproductive health care and public policy.
- 4) Write a letter to the editor** – Legislators pay close attention to what is being written in local newspapers. Write a letter to editor to offset misleading anti-choice propaganda. Contact NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado for sample letters and talking points
- 5) Help us recruit more Constituent Lobby Network activists!** Ask 5 of your friends if they would like to be “in the know” at the Capitol. It’s as easy as forwarding the e-mails that we send you to them, and asking them to respond with “Please Sign Me Up for CLN” as the subject line!

Thank you for all you do to protect a woman’s right to choose.
For Choice,
Keira Stearns, Political Organizer

What is NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado?

NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado – committed to *real* - not rhetorical - *choices*.

NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado is the political leader of the pro-choice movement in Colorado. NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado works in the following areas:

- Grassroots organizing
- Lobbying
- Working to elect pro-choice candidates and support ballot issue campaigns
- Public education and community outreach

Mission Statement

The mission of NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado is to develop and sustain a constituency that uses the political process to guarantee every woman the right to make personal decisions regarding the full range of reproductive health choices, including preventing unintended pregnancies, bearing healthy children and choosing legal abortion.

Real Choices - What Must Be Guaranteed:

✓ **GUARANTEED ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON OUR CHOICES. . .**

Sexuality education covering abstinence and birth control; contraceptive research; health care education and counseling

With factual information, we are able to make real choices...whether deciding about sexual involvement; preventing unwanted pregnancy or pursuing prenatal care.

✓ **GUARANTEED PRACTICAL ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE. . .**

Contraceptive supplies and services & voluntary sterilization; Maternity care including prenatal, delivery & postnatal gynecology; basic infertility services; adoption services; Abortion services, including medical abortion; STI and cancer screening & treatment for reproductive illnesses; abortion education and training for medical professionals to ensure that women do have choices

Practical access must be provided by national and state health care and private insurance companies so we can make real choices.

✓ **GUARANTEED PHYSICAL ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE CLINICS...**

Violent protests designed to close down clinics and harass and intimidate doctors, staff and patients must stop

National, state and local laws must address clinic violence and harassment of doctors so that we can receive the health care we choose.

✓ **GUARANTEED THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE ABORTION...**

- All reproductive options for women must be safe, legal and accessible; we must defeat anti-choice rhetoric in every level of government to ensure the right to reproductive health care services

We must be vigilant in safeguarding this right that is constantly under attack by anti-choice forces. We must fight state and federal restrictions that pose risks to women's health.

What to know if you're a woman seeking reproductive health care in Colorado

- ✓ **Right to an abortion** – It is your right to have a safe, legal abortion. Unfortunately, only 22% of Colorado counties have an abortion provider.
- ✓ **Late abortion available** - Outpatient abortion is available up to 26 weeks. In addition, medically indicated termination of pregnancy up to 34 weeks is also an option for conditions such as fetal anomalies, genetic disorder, fetal demise and/or or severe medical problems.
- ✓ **Full explanation** - You should expect to receive a full explanation of an abortion procedure and all potential complications before agreeing to it.
- ✓ **Licensed physician only** - Only a physician licensed by the state using acceptable medical procedures may perform an abortion.
- ✓ **“Bubble bill” protects you** - The state’s “bubble bill” should protect you from harassment outside an abortion clinic. A person who approaches within eight feet of another person without his/her consent within 100 feet of a health care facility or who knowingly impedes another person’s entry or exit from a health care facility commits a misdemeanor under Colorado state law.
- ✓ **EC in the ER** - Emergency room facilities that treat sexual assault survivors are required to provide information about the availability and use of emergency contraception, which can prevent unintended pregnancy if taken within 120 hours after unprotected sex.
- ✓ **No spousal consent and no mandatory waiting period** - There are no spousal consent laws in Colorado. A woman may obtain an abortion without permission and/or knowledge from her spouse. Additionally, there is no mandatory waiting period before being able to obtain an abortion.
- ✓ **Private insurance coverage not required** - In Colorado, private insurance companies are not required to cover contraception and/or abortion.
- ✓ **State medical insurance (Medicaid) coverage** - will pay for abortions in the following circumstances:
 - **If woman’s life endangered** - The procedure is necessary to preserve the life of a woman endangered by a physical disorder, physical injury, physical illness or psychiatric condition *and/or*,
 - **If rape or incest** - The pregnancy is the result of rape or incest, *and/or*,
 - **If threat to woman’s life if pregnancy continues** - The procedure is medically necessary because carrying the pregnancy to term represents a serious and substantial threat to the woman’s life.
- ✓ **Women under 18** –
 - **Right to confidential family planning** - If you are under the age of eighteen, you have the right to access confidential family planning services.
 - **Parental notification required** - If you are under the age of eighteen (and not emancipated), you must first notify at least one parent before obtaining an abortion. If you don’t want to notify a parent, you can try to obtain a waiver from a judge.

Want to know more? Go to www.ProChoiceColorado.org to see the history of reproductive rights in Colorado

Our personal freedoms and right to privacy continue to be attacked by the anti-choice forces on both the state and federal levels. Consider:

In Colorado:

- Only 22 percent of Colorado's 64 counties have an abortion provider. Women living in the remaining 78 percent of the state must cross county lines to seek an abortion.
- 2003 - A parental notification bill designed to limit reproductive health care options for young women passed on May 7, 2003, and was signed into law by Governor Bill Owens. A resolution supporting crisis pregnancy centers was also adopted by the legislature that year.
- 2007 – A bill that would have given the death penalty to doctors who performed or women who received abortions was defeated by only *one* vote
- 2008 – Amendment 48 could have made all abortions illegal by granting constitutional rights to fertilized eggs. Backers raised more than half a million dollars to bring this measure before Colorado voters.

Nationally:

- Prior to the 1994 anti-choice takeover of Congress more than half of the health insurance plans offered to federal employees contained abortion coverage. Now no woman working for the federal government has the option of selecting a health care plan that covers abortion services. More than one million women will be denied full reproductive freedom simply because they work for the U.S. government.
- Nationally, the number of abortion providers has declined over time. As of 2007, 87% of all U.S. counties lacked an abortion provider.
- States have enacted 514 anti-choice measures between 1995 and 2006 – including 45 in 2006 alone. Women's reproductive rights are more restricted today than they were in 1973, the year *Roe v. Wade* was decided.
- In April 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a federal law that makes it a crime for doctors to perform a certain abortion method – even if doing so is in the best interest of the patient. For the first time in the 35 years since the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision, the Court ruled that what is best for a woman's health is no longer paramount when politicians craft regulations about abortion.
- Future Court decisions from this strengthened anti-choice swing might allow 11 states to enact sweeping abortion bans or the Court might even grant constitutional protection to fetuses, effectively outlawing abortion entirely.
- *Roe v. Wade* is not a piece of legislation. It is a Supreme Court decision and an interpretation of the Constitution. The legality of abortion could be challenged and *Roe* could be reversed.
- A recent report released by the World Health Organization and the Guttmacher Institute found that there is a direct relationship between increased contraceptive use and reduced abortion, but the only relationship between legality and abortion is that when abortion is illegal, maternal death rates increase drastically.

NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado has many volunteer opportunities for you to expand your knowledge about the pro-choice movement and to get involved in the fight to protect a woman's right to choose.

- **Attend a celebration to commemorate our victory over Amendment 48 and the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*** – Save the date for Friday, January 23rd from 5:30-7:30 as the members of the Protect Families Protect Choice coalition responsible for defeating Amendment 48 gather to celebrate our successes and hear from featured speaker will be Sarah Weddington, the notable lawyer who won *Roe* in 1973. *Denver*
- **Pro-Choice Lobby Day:** Join hundreds of pro-choice activists on Thursday, February 26 at the Capitol to get hands on training about how the legislative process works and see your legislators in action. Travel to the Capitol to participate in volunteer lobbying, urging legislators to support prevention in reproductive health care policy. *Denver*
- **Join our “Choice Chats”:** Participate in conversations around reproductive health care issues that are important to you and your community. We will be hosting “Choice Chats” around the state beginning in May, look for one near you! *Statewide*
- **Participate in our “Voices for Choice: Lunch 'n' Learn” call series:** Stay in the know about important issues by participating in these monthly conference calls that take place over lunch. Hear from influential speakers from around the nation. *Statewide*

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION:

- **Table at Community Events and Festivals:** Inform community members about choice issues by helping us staff information tables at events and festivals from May through September. *Statewide.*
- **Host a Choice House Party:** Attend or host an informal gathering at your home and get educated about what you can do to protect choice in Colorado. *Statewide.*

FUNDRAISING & MEMBERSHIP:

- **Auction Volunteer:** Get behind the scenes at our 27th Annual Choice Celebration and Auction (April 4, 2009). Help out at the largest pro-choice auction in the nation! *Denver*

ONGOING GENERAL OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Become a Volunteer Leader:** Help engage other NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado members by calling and asking them to help out or attend various events. Join other dedicated volunteers once or twice a month to call our friends and share why NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado is important to you. *Denver.*
- **Attend Monthly Volunteer Nights:** Several times each month, volunteers come together to help complete large projects such as membership mailings, training materials, recruitment phone-banks and data entry. *Denver.*
- **Be a Daytime Office Volunteer:** Come in during the week and meet other volunteers while helping us with mailings, data entry and various other projects. *Denver.*
- **Become a Member of NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado:** NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado depends on your membership dollars to protect choice in Colorado. Members receive our newsletter, an email copy of our Insider Update and a voting guide. Over 90% of our funding comes from individual donors like you. *Statewide.*

Contact NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado
at (303) 394-1973 or e-mail volunteer@prochoicecolorado.org.
Please visit our website at www.prochoicecolorado.org to find out more!

Colorado Legislature

House of Representatives:

- 65 members
- *33 votes needed to pass or defeat a bill*

Senate:

- 35 members
- *18 votes needed to pass or defeat a bill*

Pro-Choice Composition of Colorado Legislature

In 2009, Colorado's General Assembly has pro-choice majorities in both chambers.

House of Representatives:

- **36 pro-choice** representatives
- 26 anti-choice representatives
- 1 mixed-choice representative (i.e., pro-choice who sometimes vote anti-choice, or anti-choice who sometimes vote pro-choice)
- 2 unknown

Senate:

- **21 pro-choice** senators
- 12 anti-choice senators
- 2 mixed-choice senators

NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado's "Three Wave" Lobbying

Here is how we help you in your lobbying efforts for a specific bill:

Wave 1: Complex message delivered by Constituent Lobby Network Volunteers

- NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado staff contact the Constituent Lobby Network volunteers by email. Detailed bill information and fact sheets are provided.
- Constituent Lobbyists contact their legislators via phone or email

Wave 2: Simple message delivered by members, volunteers, e-activists

- NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado staff send a pro-choice action alert with a simple message that goes out to our **Choice Action Network**. CAN members take action directly from our email alerts.
- Constituent Lobbyists contact their friends, neighbors and co-workers who live in their district.

Wave 3: Lobbyist, Board and Special Contacts provide follow-up, clear up questions and add more pressure

- One-on-one meetings or conversations with key legislators

Legislation – How a Bill Becomes Law

A. Introduced in either House or Senate

A Representative or Senator introduces the bill and is called the sponsor. Other Representatives or Senators who also support the bill co-sponsor it.

B. First Reading

The bill is read on the floor of the House or Senate and is assigned to a committee by either the Senate President or Speaker of the House. The bill may be assigned to more than one committee.

C. Committee Hearing(s)

1. Committees are often regarded as the “workshops” of the General Assembly. All bills are sent to these committees immediately following the first reading. The details of bills are carefully analyzed at committee meetings. **It is at these meetings, which are open to the public, that interested citizens express their views by testifying in support of or opposition to bills being considered.**

2. The committee must decide whether to amend the bill or to vote on it as it is. Then the committee votes and either:

- Passes the bill; postpones indefinitely (kills the bill) or; refers the bill to another committee (in which case the process is repeated).

D. Second Reading

If the bill is passed by the committee(s), it is read again on the House or Senate floor. The Representatives or Senators must choose to amend the bill or not to amend it, and then vote to pass it or not.

E. Third Reading

The final passage stage for a bill in each chamber. All votes are recorded and appear in the Journals. Debate is usually limited.

F. Process repeats in other chamber of legislature.

If the bill passes the first chamber where it was originally introduced, it then goes to the other chamber and the process repeats.

G. Conference Committee

If the bill passes both chambers but is different due to amendments, it is discussed in a conference committee. Three legislators from the House and three legislators from the Senate are appointed to the conference committee to work out one version of the bill.

H. Final Vote in House and Senate

The compromise bill worked out by the conference committee is then voted on again by both chambers.

I. Sent to the Governor for Signing

If the compromise bill passes both chambers, it is sent to the Governor for his/her signature. The Governor can:

- Sign the bill: The bill becomes law
- Not sign the bill: The bill becomes law within 10 days during session or 30 days if the session is adjourned.
- Veto the bill: The bill is sent back to both chambers of the legislature. To override the veto, the legislature must pass the bill by a 2/3 majority vote. If successful, the bill becomes law; if not, the bill dies.

Please review the flow chart on the following page that illustrates this process.

Lobby Your Legislators

Your Role as a Constituent Lobbyist... Step by Step

Lobbying is influencing legislation or public policy. It can be done by phone, letter, e-mail, fax, a personal visit, or by giving testimony at a hearing. To get lawmakers to vote our way, we must generate public support for our position- we know that the anti-choice lobby will be out there as well. The more pro-choice people we get to speak out, the greater pressure there will be on our legislators to vote pro-choice.

Things to Keep in Mind:

1. Mobilization of the grassroots equals POWER. While money influences politicians now more than ever, they still recognize the importance of support from voters who live in their district. As a constituent, you are the most effective lobbyist because it is your legislator's job to represent YOU.
2. Power also comes from good, solid information presented in an honest way. Legislators count on lobbyists to educate them about issues on which they are not experts.
3. **Being right never ensures success. Power from both grassroots support and easily accessible facts must be combined for a victory.**
4. You may be asked to call more than one time on the same bill; this may be necessary due to the legislative process concerning amendments and second or third readings
5. In the state legislature, more than 500 bills are considered in every January-May session. If your legislator seems preoccupied, it's because he or she is. Most legislators will return phone calls promptly, but because of their overwhelming work load, some will listen to your detailed voice mail and call you back only if they have additional questions.
6. After each contact (call, meeting or letter), thank your legislator; their lives are extremely hectic during the session and the time they spend with us is valuable. If possible, mail a thank you note afterwards to reinforce your contact.
7. The majority rules, so to pass or defeat a bill, we need 33 House votes and 18 Senate votes.
8. Our opposition is tenacious, so we must always be prepared.
9. Even if we lose, despite our best efforts, we succeeded in starting an important public education campaign ... we'll be more prepared for the next time!
10. The more people we have speaking up for choice, the greater our impact will be at the Capitol. So once you are done contacting your legislator about the issue, give your friends and family a call and ask them to do the same! This simple action makes a BIG difference!
11. Relax and enjoy your lobbying experience!

Some Do's and Don'ts for Lobbying Your Legislator:

1. **Do** know as much as possible about the person you are trying to influence – party affiliation, committee assignments, position on the issues, and information about his or her district. Is it urban or rural? Is there a hot issue in the district that bears on the issue that you are addressing? Are the constituents of the district disposed for or against the issue you are addressing?
2. **Do** practice talking about the issue before calling your legislator.
3. **Do** know the facts. Present the NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado position and be able to answer arguments against it. Let the legislator present his or her viewpoint fully. Be a good listener – don't interrupt.
4. **Do** confine your conversation as much as possible to the measure(s) you are discussing.
5. **Do** be clear about what you want from your legislator – vote yes on HB 210; vote no on SB 320; please reconsider your position on Amendment 5 because... etc. If you talk with him/her directly, try to get a commitment. For example, "Do you think you will support this bill?"
6. **Do** avoid any prolonged or controversial argument. This is likely to confirm the legislator with his/her own opinions. Don't try to pin the legislator into a corner; leave room for the legislator to change position on the issue later.
7. **Do** leave the legislator with a friendly feeling, even though you may disagree. Say you are sorry you can't agree and do not emphasize the difference of opinion. You will want to maintain a **RESPECTFUL** working relationship to leave the door open for future communication. Legislators' positions change over time, particularly on the choice issue. The idea of lobbying is to be convincing and keep the door open for further discussion; you will be successful if you are calm and professional.
8. **Do** be sure to express your appreciation for any support the legislator has demonstrated to the pro-choice position in the past.
9. **Don't** be afraid to admit ignorance. Say you will find the answer and report back, and be sure to do so. This is a great opportunity for follow-up with your legislator.
10. If possible, **don't** permit a legislator to commit definitely against your position. It's better to leave the representative undecided than committed against you. Someone else may be able to convince him/her.
12. **Don't** give up if you lose the first time. Many meaningful bills are only passed after 3 or 4 sessions of educating lawmakers on the merits of the issue.

Don't forget to report your progress!

- Please email or call Keira at kstearns@prochoicecolorado.org each time you have contact with your legislator and if you told your friends to do the same. Even if you only left phone or email messages, we want to know that. This information will be helpful to us in our overall lobbying strategy.
- If you prefer, you can mail or fax your contacts to us. We can be reached at NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado offices at 1905 Sherman St. Suite 800, Denver, CO 80203. Fax: 303-388-1692.

Reproductive Health Care: A Federal, State and Local Issue Words to Frame Your Arguments

WHY ARE REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND HEALTH CARE A FEDERAL ISSUE?

On the federal level, anti-choice members of Congress constantly challenge *Roe v. Wade*. U.S. Representatives and Senators have the power to propose pro-choice legislation, oppose anti-choice legislation and override anti-choice Presidential vetoes. The President can veto anti-choice legislation, sign pro-choice legislation and nominate pro-choice Supreme Court Justices. The Supreme Court has power to uphold *Roe v. Wade* and declare anti-choice legislation unconstitutional.

WHY ARE REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND HEALTH CARE A STATE ISSUE?

Elected state officials have the power to control the fate of choice in individual states. In 2005 alone, 58 new anti-choice measures were adopted by states. State senators and representatives can propose pro-choice legislation, override a governor's veto and oppose anti-choice legislation. The governor can sign or veto legislation and appoint pro-choice individuals to the U.S. Senate.

WHY ARE REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND HEALTH CARE A MUNICIPAL ISSUE?

Repeated clinic violence, attacks on providers and threats and harassment are becoming an unwelcome occurrence across the country and Colorado. City council members, city managers and mayors have power and influence in protecting medical clinics from targeted anti-choice attacks and violence. They can ensure police protection during large protests and pass and enforce city ordinances that physically separate protestors from patients and staff.

WHY ARE REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND HEALTH CARE A SCHOOL BOARD ISSUE?

Most of us would agree that sexual abstinence is a message our teens need to hear and understand. There is a movement to institute abstinence-only sex education that withholds information on contraception and birth control, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted disease prevention and refusal and avoidance techniques, rather than responsible abstinence-based programs that include all of this information.

THREE KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK CANDIDATES:

- 1.) Do you support a woman's right to abortion services? Do you support the Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion?
- 2.) Would you oppose legislative or judicial restrictions on a woman's access to abortion services?
- 3.) How would you feel about specific choice issues such as parental notification and consent, clinic access, mandatory waiting periods, spousal consent and/or abstinence-only sex education?

Want to Know More?

Here are some ways you can have an even greater impact as a Constituent Lobbyist.

✓ **Write a Letter to the Editor!**

- Got a Pen? As a concerned pro-choice advocate, write letters to the editors- let your ideas and opinions be known! Go to <http://www.prochoicecolorado.org/politicalupdates/lte.shtml> for resources and suggestions on how to write a letter to the editor.

✓ **Strengthen Your Relationship**

- The better your relationship is with your legislator, the more likely he or she will be to listen to you and do what you ask.
- Visit your legislator in person. Attaching a real person to your lobbying efforts will greatly increase your effectiveness as a lobbyist. For your best presentation, please dress appropriately...business attire or other nice clothes are best, unless you know you will be meeting at a less formal location. Talk generally about the issues rather than getting into specifics unless you are responding to a particular action alert.
- Identify a friend who may have a relationship with or added influence over your legislator. Ask your friend to contact your legislator about the issue.

✓ **Testify at a Hearing**

- We are always looking for people who can share a story and/or read a statement before legislative committees. It is a great way to have a direct role in the policy-making process and puts a real person's face on the issue. Please contact either Keira Stearns or Toni Panetta at 303-394-1973 ext. 17 before you head down to the Capitol so we can keep a look out for you!

✓ **Familiarize Yourself with Talking Points**

- Want to be sure that you are comfortable talking about reproductive health care? Go to www.ProChoiceColorado.org to access fact sheets and talking points to expand your repertoire of knowledge and become an expert!

Useful Websites for CLN Activists

NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado - www.prochoicecolorado.org

NARAL Pro-Choice America - www.prochoiceamerica.org and www.bushvchoice.com

Colorado General Assembly - www.leg.state.co.us

Thomas - Tracking Legislation in the US Congress - <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Project Vote-Smart: Find out who you elected officials are- www.vote-smart.org

Go2EC.org-Helping to improve how women access Emergency Contraception

Also, every Legislator has a website. Go check it out. If possible, sign up for their email list, so that you can stay current on what they are doing.