THE SUPREME COURT
Are You Watching?

Chief Justice Rehnquist's failing health reminds us that we MUST be ready to face a Supreme Court retirement on a moment's notice.

President Bush will likely get the chance to name two or even three justices to the Court, more than enough to tip the balance and overturn Roe v. Wade.

Given his record, we believe that any nominee put forward by Bush will be hostile to a woman's right to choose. The President opposes the freedom to choose and has never missed a chance to restrict this right. He has cited Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, two of the Court's most virulent opponents of Roe, as his model justices.

Pro-choice Coloradans must remain vigilant, keeping watch on the Court and the Bush Administration. When a retirement happens, we must be ready to make our voices heard in defense of the freedom to choose.

Visit our website at www.ProChoiceColorado.org to sign up to be a Rapid Responder today! As a Rapid Responder, you'll be the first to know what's happening and how to get involved the minute there's a retirement on the Supreme Court.

On our website you will find our new Choice Threat Advisory System, your SOURCE of up-to-date information about judicial nominees. Save this page to your "Favorites" and check it regularly for changes in the warning system and new actions you can take.

NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado and the Colorado Progressive Coalition recently spearheaded the creation of the Colorado Coalition for Fair Justices.

The goal of the Colorado Coalition for Fair Justices is to encourage the nomination of moderate federal and Supreme Court justices who will uphold our basic rights and freedoms. We bring together groups of diverse interests to fight the nomination of justices who will curtail our rights, including civil and religious liberties, civil and human rights, and workplace and environmental protections. The coalition communicates regularly with its distinct memberships and coordinates field and media strategies for upcoming nomination battles.

Please contact Jeanette Blize, Political Organizer, at (303) 394-1973, ext. 15 or jblize@ProChoiceColorado.org for more information or to get involved.

THE VOICE FOR CHOICE
NARAL PRO-Choice Colorado

Spring 2005 Colorado State Legislative Overview

Following our success in the November 2004 elections, the Colorado General Assembly began in January, for the first time in decades, with a pro-choice majority in both the House and Senate. This legislative session was marked with the sound defeat of every anti-choice bill introduced. Unfortunately, we also saw the veto of an important bill which would have provided sexual assault survivors with information about emergency contraception (EC).

HB 1042, EC in the ER for Rape Survivors, was a bill that would have required all Colorado hospital emergency rooms to provide rape victims with information about emergency contraception (EC). EC is a form of birth control that can be taken up to 120 hours (5 days) after unprotected sex to prevent a pregnancy. The bill was approved in the House by a vote of 46-19 and in the Senate 22-13.

In late March, the bill was sent to the governor. NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado and coalition partners, including the Republican Majority for Choice and the Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA), organized a press conference at the Capitol.

At the press conference, volunteers from NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado delivered more than 5,000 letters to Governor Owens. The press conference launched a media campaign that received coverage all over the state and across the country. In addition, NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado ran a “Letter-to-the-Editor” campaign, yielding over 100 letters written to newspaper publications around Colorado in favor of HB 1042.

Unfortunately, Governor Owens decided to turn his back on rape victims and veto HB 1042 on April 5, 2005; the very day he received the bill.

Our efforts didn’t stop there. On Friday, April 29, 2005, hundreds of Coloradans, outraged by the governor’s veto, gathered at the State Capitol for a rally in support of an override. NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado volunteers were joined by coalition partners to make the rally a success and draw attention to the override attempt to be held in the House of Representatives the following Monday.

In Colorado, both the House and the Senate must vote in a 2/3 majority to override the governor’s veto. As the votes were counted on Monday, May 2nd, it was clear that the override attempt came up short by 11 votes. There were 11 Republicans who voted for the bill the first time. Every single one switched their votes to then side with Governor Owens against the bill when the override vote took place.

(continues on page 4)
**UPDATE**  

**From the Executive Director**

Dear NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado Family,

We learned two important lessons during the first part of 2005: Having a pro-choice majority in the legislature is great AND we must elect a pro-choice Governor!

As most of you know, our State Legislature passed the EC in the ER bill (HB 1042), only to see it vetoed by Governor Bill Owens. You can read more about it on pages 1 and 4. We tried for an override—the first ever in our Governor’s tenure—but we just did not have the votes. The sponsors, Representative Betty Boyd and Senator Jennifer Veiga, are fearless and pledge to be back next year to continue to improve access to emergency contraception (EC) for sexual assault survivors in Colorado—stay tuned!

We are still waiting for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to make its decision about whether or not it will allow emergency contraception (EC) to be sold “over-the-counter” (OTC). There have been countless editorials and op-eds written in support of EC OTC status across the country. A positive decision could truly revolutionize women’s reproductive health care by providing access to one of its best kept secrets.

In anticipation of a Supreme Court retirement this summer, we have spearheaded the creation of a progressive coalition to fight Bush’s nominations to the federal courts. Even if it doesn’t happen, we need to be on guard for the next four years. Please read more about our organizing efforts on page 1.

One thing that never slows down is the need for education about reproductive health care options for women and men in Colorado. As of this month, the Access Project has distributed over 15,000 bi-lingual publications! Our brochure for youth, their parents and health care providers, entitled “ Thinking About Sex? What Teens Should Know About Reproductive Health Care,” has been incredibly popular.

Finally, thanks to everyone who helped make the Annual Choice Celebration and Auction in April a success. It was, as always, a fabulous event! We are now trying to find house party hosts for small, intimate gatherings this summer and fall. Let us know if you are interested.

For Choice,

Beth Ganz  
Executive Director

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23rd Annual Choice Celebration and Auction — a Huge Success!

Nearly 600 people filled the Hyatt Regency in Denver for NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado’s 23nd Annual Choice Celebration and Auction on April 2, 2005, making it the largest pro-choice auction in the country (and in NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado’s history)! The event included a Silent and Live Auction, and featured more than 350 items, including trips, gourmet meals, sports, entertainment packages and much more.

Thanks to all of the individuals and businesses who generously donated items and services this year, and to the over 100 volunteers who worked tirelessly to ensure that the event was a success.

Information about next year’s Auction will be available later this fall.

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All photos by Kevin Schill
Letter From Medical Students for Choice

Editor’s Note: On March 10, 2005, dozens of NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado volunteers baked cookies, signed cards, and helped as delivery gifts to over 20 abortion providers across the state in honor of “National Day of Appreciation for Abortion Providers.” In addition, hundreds of people, through our website, sent personal messages of encouragement and support.

The local Medical Students for Choice (MSFC) group at UCHSC sent the below letter to major newspapers. Unfortunately, it was not printed, but we would like to share their message with you—a message that is powerful not just on March 10th, but EVERY day.

Recently, a group of medical students listened to a panel of doctors speak about why they decided to provide abortions. Many spoke of their experiences as physicians before the Roe v. Wade decision offered women the right to choose. One spoke of how never a week went by that he did not see a woman die from complications of an illegal abortion. It was these events that moved him to provide abortion services as part of his practice.

Today we celebrate the 10th annual National Day of Appreciation for Abortion Providers (NDAAP). This date was chosen to commemorate the anniversary of the murder of Dr. David Gunn, a woman’s health care provider, by an anti-abortion extremist on March 10, 1993. On this day, we want to publicly thank our providers for their heroism, perseverance, and commitment to making reproductive choice a reality for women.

Abortion is one of the most common and safest medical procedures requested and performed in the United States. Despite this need, there is a severe shortage of doctors willing to provide abortions. About 87% of Colorado and U.S. counties do not have a single abortion provider. Currently, there is only one doctor in the state who will provide services to a woman who is six months pregnant and learns her baby won’t survive because of a fatal abnormality. Without this option, she would have to travel hundreds of miles to another state to receive care.

Anti-choice tactics of intimidation, harassment and violence have caused doctors and hospitals to shy away from offering abortion services, and have stopped students and residents from pursuing education in abortion training. Since 1993, seven abortion providers and clinic workers have been murdered and in 2002 alone, there were 265 acts of violence against providers and clinics, including arson, burglary, vandalism, anthrax threats and stalking.

Not surprisingly, there has been a 37% decline in the number of physicians providing abortions in this country since the early 1980’s. And half of those physicians who continue to provide this care are approaching retirement age.

To make matters worse, those of us emerging from medical schools and residency programs are not being trained to provide this procedure. Despite the fact that 88% of all abortions occur in the first trimester, less than 27% of U.S. Ob/Gyn residency programs require routine first-trimester abortion training.

Abortion is more than a political controversy—it is a critical public health issue and must be included as a standard part of medical education if women are to be able to receive the best quality care.

As members of Medical Students for Choice, a network of 7,000 medical students and residents across the U.S. and Canada, we are working to change medical education and training. As future physicians, we are dedicated to providing women with the full range of reproductive health services, including information and access to birth control, emergency contraception (EC), testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and safe abortion services. Guaranteeing that physicians are prepared to meet the needs of their patients is just good, responsible medical care.

Join us in thanking abortion providers on March 10—because without them, there is NO CHOICE.

Clarice Baumgartner, MS II
Anna Dermish, MS III
Megan Lederer, MS I
Christopher May, MS II
Jenny McConnell, MS II
Kerry Opdyke, MS III

Members, Medical Students for Choice, University of Colorado School of Medicine

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Check out www.ProChoiceColorado.org!

Have you been to the NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado website lately? We have added new and exciting features.

Check out our homepage for access to our bi-lingual educational publications, current attacks on choice, and to see our newest feature, One-Minute Activist.

One-Minute Activist helps you make a difference with a quick and simple action. Sign a petition, sign-up for a rally, tell friends about the latest choice news– it’s all available with just the click of a mouse. The action changes frequently, so check out www.ProChoiceColorado.org often!

Coming Soon:
A Colorado Pro-Choice Business Directory

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Curves CEO and Founder of Curves International, Gary Heavin, has reportedly donated millions of dollars to anti-choice organizations.

Curves is currently the second largest franchise in America, with 7,500 locations and 3 million members worldwide. The health clubs are independently owned franchises, many owned by women. They purportedly provide a friendly, "woman-centered" environment by allowing women to work-out in 30-minute sessions, three times a week, without mirrors and with the help of weight management counseling.

Gary Heavin disputes the claims that he funds anti-choice organizations, but says he supports organizations that promote the health and wellness of women and their families. The evidence speaks otherwise.

For example, one of the organizations that benefits from Heavin’s contributions is called CareNet. CareNet receives $150,000 annually from Gary Heavin in order to fund their services. According to the National Organization for Women (NOW), CareNet operates "crisis pregnancy centers" that discourage women from considering abortion. In addition, the McLennan County Collaborative Abstinence Project, which advocates and teaches abstinence programs in central Texas, has also confirmed receiving support from Heavin.

Although individual Curves clubs are independently owned, some part of their annual profit goes back to Gary Heavin.

So what does this mean for women with memberships to Curves and pro-choice politics? Ultimately the choice is an individual one, as President of NOW, Kim Gandy, stated in an interview on NBC’s Weekend Today Show.

"Women as consumers … ought to do what they can to inform themselves so that they can put their money where their politics are."
Spring 2005
Colorado State Legislative Overview
(continued from page 1)

In addition to our efforts with HB 1042, NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado helped defeat every piece of anti-choice legislation introduced this legislative session. Among these bills was HB 1260, a ban on abortion in Colorado. HB 1260 was defeated in House Judiciary Committee on a party line vote of 6-4.

Representative Greg Brophy (R-Wray) introduced HB 1106, a bill that would have mandated unnecessary additional anesthesia for women seeking abortion services. This bill was killed in the House Judiciary Committee by a vote of 6-5.

For addition, a bill was introduced that would have changed the medical and scientific accepted definition of pregnancy. This bill, HB 1155, was killed in the House Judiciary Committee by a vote of 7-4.

And finally, Representative David Shultheis (R-COLORADO Springs) introduced, again, legislation that would target abortion providers and their facilities by placing on them burdensome and unnecessary fees, regulations and rules designed to put them out of business. HB 1072 was defeated in the House Health and Human Services Committee by a vote of 7-6.

To read more about the Spring 2005 Colorado State Legislative Sessions (and legislation from past sessions), please see our “Political Updates” section at www.ProChoiceColorado.org.

Help us with Community Outreach this Summer!

Each summer, NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado reaches out to Colorado communities to continue to build a grassroots pro-choice movement by tabling at festivals and marching in benefit walks and parades. This year, our goal is to collect signatures in support of fair and moderate judicial nominees to the federal and Supreme Court.

We cannot be successful this summer without your help! We need over 100 volunteers to sign up for our summer outreach opportunities. If you are interested in volunteering at any of the summer festivals listed below, please contact DeeDee Cada, Summer Outreach Coordinator, at (303) 394-1973, ext. 11 or dcada@ProChoiceColorado.org to sign up. DeeDee comes to us with lots of grassroots organizing experience and we are happy to have her on staff for the summer.

Please volunteer for a shift at any of the Summer Festivals and Parades listed below:

- Boulder Creek Festival, Boulder: May 28–30
- People’s Fair, Denver: June 4–5
- Highland Square Street Fair, Denver: June 18
- PrideFest (Parade and Booth), Denver: June 26
- PrideFest, Colorado Springs: July 17
- New West Fest, Fort Collins: August 20-21
- Colorado AIDS Walk, Denver: August 21

GET INVOLVED THIS SUMMER! Help us recruit new members by volunteering for a shift at any of the festivals or parades.

SAVE TIME AND MONEY…
Give monthly to NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado

Friends of NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado are dedicated supporters who make regular monthly contributions.

By giving a monthly donation, you help save valuable resources by eliminating the need to send special donation appeals.

In addition, as long as you give through the Friends of NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado Program, your membership never expires!

It’s easy to join …
Simply complete the enclosed envelope and authorize a monthly charge to a major credit or debit card. Or, set up your monthly contribution online by visiting us at www.ProChoiceColorado.org.

Friends of NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado
Make a Difference!