



# Students Stand Up for Choice!

SPRING 2006

Planned Parenthood of Central Ohio

## Local Vox Groups are Making a Difference



Members of Otterbein's new Vox Chapter



OSU Vox Celebrates Roe



OSU Vox members tabling during Alito's hearing

**Vox:** Voices for Planned Parenthood at The Ohio State University has made great strides since its formation in the fall of 2002. Vox, Latin for "voice," is a national campus outreach program initiated by Planned Parenthood Federation of America, working to mobilize a new generation of supporters. Since its inception, Vox at OSU has served to broaden the understanding of Planned Parenthood's mission and services. Outreach efforts have included film nights, panel discussions, town hall forums, flyering and safe sex "goodie bag" distributions. To date, the group has over 20 active members and a list serv composed of over 450 students.

As advocates for choice on a conservative campus, Vox members play an important role in educating their peers about current reproductive rights issues. The recent nomination, and subsequent confirmation, of Samuel Alito provided a collaborative organizing opportunity among progressive student groups at OSU. Vox joined with the College Democrats, the ACLU, and Women and Allies Rising in Resistance in creating a photo petition against Alito. Students posed with hand-written signs stating why they opposed the nomination—many decried Alito's blatant anti-choice judicial record and expressed concern over the future of Roe. The photos are available online at the Vox website: <http://vox.org.ohio-state.edu/alito.html>.

OSU Vox has continued to gain visibility on campus in 2006, with the publication of Lantern editorials and mention of the group's work in articles related to the Roe v. Wade anniversary and Emergency Contraception. In January, Vox celebrated the 33rd anniversary of Roe with an open house, providing students the opportunity to learn more about the organization while enjoying cake and ice cream. February's "Sex and the Environment" panel discussion with representatives from the Sierra Club was a big success with close to 30 students in attendance! Vox strengthened its membership by holding a winter retreat, which featured a message training component with PPCO staff, instructing students how to talk about Planned Parenthood issues in a concise and consistent manner. There seems no limit to their hard work and involvement!

The success of the OSU Vox chapter has inspired students at other local universities. Otterbein University started a Vox organization in the fall of 2005. To date the group has approximately 15 members and is coordinating a forum with the school's health clinic nurse on the topic of HPV. Several students at Denison University have expressed interest in forming a Vox group at their campus as well.

For more information on how to get involved with a current Vox group or to start new chapter, please email [advocacy@ppcoh.org](mailto:advocacy@ppcoh.org).

## Message From the Executive Director

March is Women's History Month, an appropriate time to contemplate the decades-long struggle to achieve and protect our reproductive rights, which are more tenuous than ever. I recently had the opportunity to have lunch with our OSU pro-choice student organization, Vox: Voices for Planned Parenthood, and was inspired by their work to combat the misinformation that pervades their community. The Vox generation has grown up under the protections of Roe; they have not experienced a time when women were forced to resort to desperate, often fatal, measures to obtain an abortion. Many younger people are



shocked to know that birth control has only been legal since the early 1960's, or that birth control was once denied to unmarried persons.

Recruiting and educating a new generation of supporters is critical to our survival. Planned Parenthood of Central Ohio (PPCO) is actively working to diversify our support base through advocacy efforts like Vox and the Young Advocates

(see next page). It is imperative that we expand our circle of friends, especially in light of the important gubernatorial and congressional elections to be held later this year.

Over the summer PPCO will be implementing a voter education initiative, which will include non-partisan, issue-oriented materials in our health centers, and educational house parties. We have learned the hard way that elections matter! The confirmation of John Roberts & Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court were great disappointments to advocates of women's health and safety. Anti-choice hardliners have infiltrated all three branches of our government, at both the federal and state levels. An easy way to monitor legislative activities is to join the Planned Parenthood Action Network. This convenient, free service keeps you informed of pending legislation and other news of interest via email, and allows you to contact your representatives with the click of a button. To join simply visit our website: [www.plannedparenthoodcentralohio.org](http://www.plannedparenthoodcentralohio.org) and click on "Take Action," then "Get Involved." Become a voice for choice!

*Lisa D. Perks*

PS—help change the face of your government - host a house party!  
Call 358-8730.

## Cocktails for a Cause is back!



**Surly Girl co-owners Carmen Owens & Liz Lessner (not pictured, Marcy Mays).**

### Young Advocates Toast to Choice

The Young Advocates hosted another successful Cocktails for a Cause on February 16th. Close to 40 young professionals attended the February event, held at the Surly Girl Studio. Featured guest, PPCO Executive Director Lisa Perks, described the current political environment post-Alito, and emphasized the importance of grass roots organizing in combating the anti-choice agenda. Surly Girl owners, Liz Lessner, Carmen Owens and Marcy Mays created an eclectic environment for the event - a chocolate fountain, wine bar, and appetizers were enjoyed amidst local artwork and a view of the burgeoning Garden District. The Young Advocates have committed to hosting four events in 2006, and will implement educational "house parties" over the summer focusing on voter education. To join the planning committee or for more information please call 358-8730 or email: [advocacy@ppcoh.org](mailto:advocacy@ppcoh.org).

**SAVE THE DATE!** The next Cocktails for a Cause will be held on Thursday, May 18th...the evening's theme: Sex Ed for Adults. Don't miss it!

# Stage is Set for Heightened Restrictions and a Direct Challenge to Roe!

## South Dakota Bans Abortion

On February 22, South Dakota became the first state in 14 years to pass legislation, signed by the governor on March 6, aimed at directly challenging Roe v. Wade, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion nationwide. Under the legislation, doctors in South Dakota would face up to five years in prison for performing an abortion. Senators rejected calls for exceptions in the case of incest, rape or for the health of the woman, and instead voted 23 to 12 to outlaw all abortions, except those to save the woman's life. PPFAs senior staff attorney, Eve Gartner noted, "South Dakota's ban is the most sweeping abortion ban passed by any state in more than a decade. Planned Parenthood will go to court to ensure women, with their doctors and families, continue to be able to make personal health care decisions - not politicians."

Immediately after the South Dakota ban was passed, the state House in Mississippi began considering a similar measure that would ban nearly all abortions in that state. And on March 1, a Missouri lawmaker proposed a bill to ban nearly all abortions in his state.

At the state level, more than 850 choice-related bills have been introduced or carried over in the first two months of the 2006 legislative session. In all, legislators in 11 states — Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, and West Virginia — have introduced bills this year to ban nearly all abortions. Even in the traditionally pro-choice state of Massachusetts, Governor Mitt Romney (R) announced this month that he would sign a bill outlawing most abortions if it ever reached his desk.

Mounting restrictions on access to abortion, including waiting periods, parental notification laws, and state-mandated educational materials, are a frightening reality in most states. Kate Looby, president of the Planned Parenthood South Dakota affiliate reflected on life without the protections of Roe: "It scares me to think that may in fact be the reality for my daughter's generation."

Political and grass roots organizing efforts are underway to combat the ban. On March 9th a national day of solidarity was declared to stand with the women of South Dakota. A crowd of 70 gathered at the state house in Columbus to protest the ban, joining at least 47 other events held across the country.

## Supreme Court to Review Federal Abortion Ban that Would Outlaw Abortions as Early as 12 to 15 Weeks in Pregnancy

The Supreme Court recently announced that it would hear *Gonzales v. Carhart*, a case challenging the federal abortion ban. The ban, passed by Congress and signed by President Bush in 2003, would outlaw abortions as early as 12 to 15 weeks in pregnancy.

"The Supreme Court's decision to hear this case is a dangerous act of hostility aimed squarely at women's health and safety. Despite 33 years of Supreme Court precedent that women's health matters, the court has decided it will once again take up this issue," said Cecile Richards, president of PPFAs. "Health care decisions should be made by women, with their doctors and families — not politicians. Lawmakers should stop playing politics with women's health and lives."

Every court that has examined the ban has struck it down because, among other things, the ban does not protect women's health. Just six years ago, the Supreme Court itself struck down an abortion ban passed by the state of Nebraska because it did not have a health exception, and Justice O'Connor's was the critical vote that upheld protections for women's health and safety. Of course, Justice O'Connor has retired and been replaced on the court by Justice Alito.

When President Bush signed the ban in 2003, PPFAs, the Center for Reproductive Rights, the National Abortion Federation and the American Civil Liberties Union challenged it in federal district courts around the country and won. Major medical groups, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Nurses Association and many other medical and health care associations oppose the federal ban.

**Please visit [www.ppfas.org](http://www.ppfas.org) to monitor these and other national developments.**

**To contact your elected officials visit:**

**[www.ppfas.org](http://www.ppfas.org)**

# Access to Emergency Contraception Protected in Massachusetts

On February 14th, the Massachusetts Board of Pharmacy issued a decision on Wal-Mart's refusal to stock Emergency Contraception (EC), concluding that Wal-Mart is required to stock EC in its Massachusetts pharmacies.

"This is terrific news, but it is only a first step. Increased access to emergency contraception will reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and the need for abortion in Massachusetts," said Angus McQuilken, Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts director of public relations.

Planned Parenthood's media campaign criticizing Wal-Mart's policy led to further victory two weeks later when Wal-Mart revised their national policy, making EC available at stores throughout the US.

The board's review of Wal-Mart's policies was prompted by a lawsuit filed last month by three Massachusetts women, who were denied emergency contraception at Wal-Mart pharmacies in the Greater Boston area. Massachusetts regulations require licensed pharmacies to stock all commonly prescribed medications that meet the needs of the community.

Experts estimate that wider access to EC could prevent up to 1.7 million unintended pregnancies - and 800,000 abortions - a year. Emergency contraception pills contain hormones that reduce the risk of pregnancy when started within 120 hours of unprotected intercourse. The sooner emergency contraception is administered after unprotected intercourse, the better it works, making timely access critically important.

## Pharmacist Refusal Reintroduced to the Ohio Legislature

On February 22nd, the Ohio House Health Committee heard testimony on the newly worded Pharmacist Denial Bill (House Bill 469). The current bill seeks to provide protection from civil liability to pharmacists and other providers of medication who choose not to distribute medication that may result in an abortion or termination of life. Current Ohio law allows only licensed medical physicians to dispense Mifeprestone, the medication used to terminate a pregnancy, also known as RU486. The deceptive language attempts to position various forms of contraception, specifically birth control pills and Emergency Contraception (EC), as abortifacients, which is scientifically untrue. The bill's sponsor, Keith Faber, a Republican from Celina, made his intentions very clear during the recent hearing, falsely implying that emergency contraception and birth control cause abortion and that life begins at conception. The broad language of the bill would allow pharmacists to refuse to fill prescriptions for birth control or EC. Given the time-sensitive nature of EC, it is imperative that women have immediate access; a pharmacist's refusal to dispense could have dire consequences, particularly for victims of rape or incest. Please visit [www.ppao.org](http://www.ppao.org) for continued coverage of this bill.

## PPFA Appoints New President



In January, Planned Parenthood Federation of America announced the appointment of Cecile Richards as the organization's next president. "It is

a great honor to assume the leadership of an organization that stands for the very freedoms embraced by the majority of Americans; the ability to decide when and whether to have children; and the importance of privacy, safety and access to health care," Ms. Richards said. "I look forward to working with Planned Parenthood affiliates, staff and partners to realize the dream of access to reproductive health care for all."

Ms. Richards has a long history of work in the reproductive rights community. She created and directed the Turner Foundation's national pro-choice project and has served on the boards of the Planned Parenthood Action Fund and NARAL Pro-Choice America. Ms. Richards left her post as president of America Votes to assume this new role.

## Free Pills!

Beginning in February, if you buy three packs of birth control pills at your regular rate, you will receive a free pack! Offer good at any PPCO Health Center.

**Q:** How long does the offer last?

**A:** Indefinitely.

**Q:** Free pill are great, but I use the patch.

**A:** This offer applies to birth control pills only, not to the patch, the ring, or any of the other birth control methods that PPCO offers.

**Q:** Do I have to pay up-front?

**A:** To be eligible for the free pill offer, you must pay at the time of service and not have an outstanding balance with PPCO.

**Q:** What if I order pills online?

**A:** If you meet the same conditions (buying at least 3 packs of pills; no outstanding balance), you can get free pills.

# PPCO Health Centers Now Offer Thin Prep

Thanks to funding provided by the Columbus Foundation and the Columbus Medical Association Foundation (CMAF), PPCO health clinics now offer Thin Prep, a more accurate and efficient form of cervical testing. Thousands of women from low-income households rely upon (PPCO) health centers to provide high-quality reproductive healthcare and screening services. Thin Prep testing provides more accurate test results for women, reducing the need for expensive follow-up testing when "false positive" results occur. Receiving accurate test results the first time reduces the level of stress and worry for families, and helps them avoid the extra scheduling, childcare, and transportation hassles associated with additional medical procedures. Additionally, Thin Prep testing allows faster follow-up treatment when true positive test results occur that indicate the possibility of cervical cancer and other abnormalities, with better health outcomes and improved survival rates as a result. Thanks to the Columbus Foundation and the CMAF for supporting quality health care in central Ohio!

## PPCO Title X Funds Renewed

Title X of the Public Health Service Act, is America's family planning program. Signed into law in 1970 by Richard Nixon, Title X is the only federal program dedicated solely to funding family planning and related reproductive health care services. For more than 30 years, Title X has worked to reduce unintended pregnancy by providing contraceptive and related reproductive health care services to low-income women.

Planned Parenthood of Central Ohio recently completed an extensive application process, which included site visits and meetings with staff, resulting in a renewal of approximately \$700,000 in Title X funds! This funding allows us to offer free and/or reduced fee services to qualifying low-income women at select center locations.

## Ohio Ranks Poorly in National Contraceptive Access Study

Ohio ranks 48th out of 50 states and the District of Columbia in preventing unintended pregnancies, according to a newly released Guttmacher Institute study. The independent Guttmacher study assessed each state's commitment to helping women avoid unintended pregnancy by measuring access to contraception; laws and policies that either facilitate or hinder access to birth control and family planning information; and public funding for family planning services between 1994 and 2001. Here are a few of the study's other findings:

- Ohio has the 29th highest teenage pregnancy rate of any state.
- Publicly funded family planning clinics in Ohio help women prevent 45,2000 unintended pregnancy's each year.
- Every public dollar spent on family planning services saves the federal and state governments three dollars in Medicaid costs for prenatal and newborn care.
- Ohio ranked worst in categories of sex education policy and restrictions on family planning funds.

## Annual Campaign Makes Goal!

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, and the hard work of our campaign captains, 2005's Annual Campaign was a success! Your support helped us exceed our goal of \$220,000! This money will be used to subsidize health care for low income women, and to bolster our increasingly popular educational programs. On behalf of our patients and staff, we thank you!

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## Confused about your PP?

- **Planned Parenthood of Central Ohio** (PPCO) is your local affiliate. When you make a contribution to PPCO, your dollars stay in central Ohio to provide health care services, education and advocacy in your community. That's us!
- **Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Ohio** (PPAO) is the political arm for all 10 Planned Parenthood affiliates in Ohio. PPAO advocates for public policy changes that will enhance and protect reproductive rights, and builds support among our elected officials in Ohio. Donations to PPAO are used for electoral and lobbying efforts.
- **Planned Parenthood Federation of America** (PPFA) is the national organization. Gifts to PPFA are used to support national advocacy efforts, international services, and technical assistance for all 121 Planned Parenthood affiliates. However, your gift to PPFA does not support local services.

### Health Center Locations

#### Columbus

3255 East Main Street

18 East 17th Avenue

1511 West Broad Street

1390 Cleveland Avenue

#### Delaware

152 West Central Avenue

#### Cireleville

133 Lewis Avenue



Planned Parenthood®  
of Central Ohio, Inc.

206 East State Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

614-224-2235

Appointments 1-800-230-PLAN

Facts of LifeLine 614-222-3613

[www.plannedparenthoodcentralohio.org](http://www.plannedparenthoodcentralohio.org)

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