

COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

40 YEARS

MARKING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE

“Freedom of choice is essential for women and for all the men who truly care about them... We all need to be reminded of what it was like in the bad old days—we simply cannot let that happen again.”

- Lee Minto, former Executive Director of Planned Parenthood of Seattle / King County

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PPGNW Commemorates 40 Years of Safe and Legal Abortion

Events in Alaska, Idaho, and Washington bring hundreds of supporters together for reflection on landmark Supreme Court decision

By Kristen Glundberg-Prossor, Director of Media Relations

Forty years ago on January 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its decision on Roe v. Wade. In short, the Supreme Court ruled that a woman’s right to terminate a pregnancy is encompassed in the constitution’s protection of individual privacy—a woman’s decision whether or not to continue a pregnancy is a fundamental right, alongside the rights of freedom of speech and religion. Four decades later, a majority of Americans still agree with the high court—that personal health care decisions should be left up to the woman.

Prior to Roe, abortion was unsafe and unregulated. Infected obstetric wards (IOBs) were full of women who had complications from self-induced or back alley abortions. If a woman had the money, she could pay \$1,000 and fly to Japan for an abortion. Unfortunately, few women had those options. Health care disparities continue to impact a woman’s choices today.

Planned Parenthood hosted several poignant and powerful events across our three states to commemorate this landmark decision. Hundreds

of supporters gathered in Anchorage, Boise, Olympia, Seattle and Soldotna. Through a mix of personal stories and multi-media, Planned Parenthood supporters of all generations came together to remember this important anniversary and were once again reminded of the need for continual vigilance.



Nikolas Peterson, VP of Planned Parenthood Young Professionals, enjoys an inspiring moment at our Town Hall Roe event

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Executive Update

A message from Christine Charbonneau, CEO

The U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion in the historic Roe v. Wade decision 40 years ago last month. This landmark ruling affirmed that the constitutionally protected right to privacy includes every woman's ability to make

her own medical decisions, without interference by politicians. Four decades later, a majority of Americans, many of whom self-identify as "pro-life," agree: abortion should remain a safe and legal option for women.

Furthermore, Americans seem to be firmly opposed to policies that demean and dismiss women. We saw evidence of this in November's election where voters rejected some of the nation's most vocal and extreme opponents of safe and legal abortion. Yet, despite the outcome of the election, we continue to fight politicians here in the Northwest and across the country who are seemingly obsessed with chipping away at abortion access.

Since 2011, 135 abortion restrictions have been passed, including restrictions that require women seeking abortion care to undergo invasive ultrasound procedures and restrictions that impose stringent regulations on abortion providers. Not one progressive piece of legislation on reproductive health passed in any state in 2012.

Alaska, Idaho, and Washington vary greatly with respect to their abortion laws. Of the three states Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW) serves, Washington is the least restrictive and Idaho is the most. Washington and Alaska were two of just four states to legalize abortion before the Roe decision. In Washington, abortion funding was passed by a vote of the people. In Alaska, the Supreme Court ordered nondiscriminatory public funding of abortion under the premise that restricting access is blatant government overreach into a woman's personal medical decisions. During the last

decade, Alaska has passed requirements for directed counseling before an abortion and parental notification.

In Idaho, it was Roe that legalized abortion, and since 1973, the legislature has passed many restrictions including: mandated biased counseling and a 24-hour waiting period; insurance policy restrictions on abortion coverage; parental consent; and a ban on abortions after 20 weeks. Just last year, we fought successfully against two more restrictions: a mandatory ultrasound bill and a bill that would limit birth control access to Idaho women.

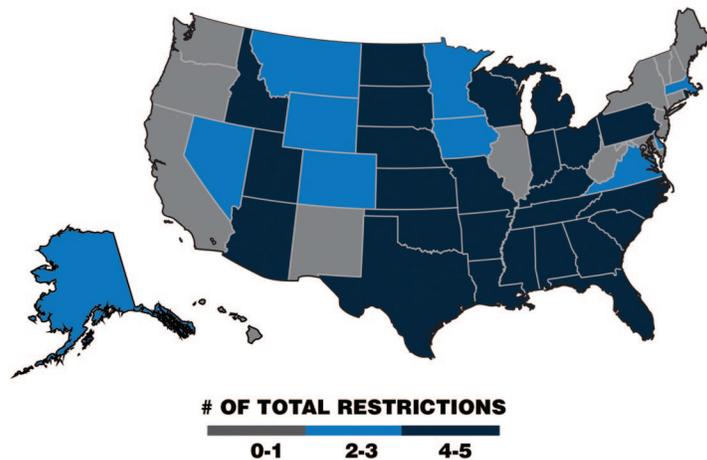
In the real world, women don't turn to politicians for advice about birth control, mammograms, or cancer screenings, and it continually amazes me that legislators interject themselves into these personal and private decisions about pregnancy.

Ending the days of dangerous and often deadly back-alley abortions in the United States has been Roe's finest legacy. The women who died rather than face an unintended pregnancy were not around to witness Roe, but some of us witnessed their desperation, or we have heard their stories. I know one thing for sure: We must never, ever return to the days of criminalizing abortion. Protecting women's health, even four decades later, takes vigilance and a new generation of activists who understand what's at stake. The stories are important.

At PPGNW, we work every day to reduce unintended pregnancies and keep women healthy. We ensure that a woman has accurate information about all her pregnancy options including parenting, adoption, or abortion. And then we leave pregnancy decisions where they belong: with a woman,

her family and her faith, with the counsel of her doctor or health-care provider.

If you would like to ensure that we never have to turn away a woman in need of an abortion because she cannot afford it, please consider making a gift to our Abortion Access Fund.



Legislative Update

By Sara Kiesler, Communications Specialist, Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest (PPVNW) and Jennifer M. Allen, Director of Public Policy, PPVNW



The start of the Alaska legislative session brought super majorities for Republicans in both chambers. Four Democrats have joined House Republicans, and Representative Lindsey Holmes, whom PPVNW endorsed, switched parties and registered as a Republican a few days before session started. Though there are still supporters of reproductive health and rights in both chambers and both parties, with the loss of the Senate bipartisan coalition and the current governorship of Republican Sean Parnell, women's health will see attacks in the coming months.

Currently, Senate Majority Leader John Coghill has introduced Senate Bill 49, a bill attacking constitutionally protected Medicaid funding for abortion, which would interfere with patient and doctor decision making.

The governor issued a statement that Alaska will not establish a health insurance exchange, though he is looking into whether or not to expand Medicaid. At stake are 32,000 Alaskans who lack coverage. We are advocating the legislature pursue a Medicaid family planning waiver program in Alaska, similar to Washington's Take Charge program.



The 2013 Idaho legislative session started slowly with little action relating to women's health. However, House Bill (HB) 62, which passed the House by a vote of 58-12, will offer tax exemptions for Limited Service Pregnancy Centers. The legislation is discriminatory, only granting tax exemptions to anti-abortion pregnancy clinics that offer information that is often false and misleading, and not applying to any other pregnancy care clinics.

Governor Butch Otter announced in his State of the State address that Idaho will not pursue the expansion of Medicaid which is fully federally funded for two years under the Affordable Care Act (ACA): this will affect 8.6 percent of the state's low-income adults. He added that pending legislative approval, Idaho will move forward with a state-run health insurance exchange pursuant to the ACA. With a legislature so hostile to the ACA, we remain vigilant regarding legislative action involving reproductive rights and access.

Progress is being made toward a statewide Human Rights Act to legally protect lesbian, gay, and transgender people in Idaho from discrimination. After numerous ordinances passed in cities across Idaho last year, we hope legislators recognize there is major support for an anti-discrimination bill.



The legislative session commenced with a Senate takeover by the Republicans and two Democrats with the introduction of Senate Bill (SB) 5156, a "parental notice" (read: teen endangerment) bill by Senator Don Benton from Vancouver. Most teens already involve their parents in their pregnancy decisions, but some teens can't turn to their parents, and it's most important they are safe. The bill is opposed by King County Sheriff John Urquhart, and numerous pediatrics advocacy and sexual assault advocacy associations.

The Reproductive Parity Act (SB 5009 and 5576 / HB 1044), a bill to ensure abortion coverage for Washington women is maintained in their insurance under the ACA, passed a House Committee, and we are moving forward in the House and Senate. Women need the freedom and privacy to make their own pregnancy decisions; their employer or insurance plan should not have that power.

We continue to advocate with Governor Inslee's office and the Legislature to maintain family planning funding in the Medicaid Take Charge program and Department of Health to ensure birth control access is protected for every woman as health reform is implemented.

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In Anchorage, a passionate group of 50 Alaskans celebrated 43 years of reproductive freedom in Alaska—three years longer than the Roe legacy! “While barriers to accessing abortion in Alaska are extreme—limited number of providers, difficult geography, directed counseling before abortions, and required parental notice—Alaskan activists enthusiastically discussed the future of reproductive rights and ways to counter the ongoing attempts to restrict Roe,” said Caitlin Hedberg, Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW) Development Officer.

In Boise, Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest (PPVNW) had a fantastic turnout of community members and legislators. Many attendees recalled what it was like before women had access to safe and legal abortion—when women had to gamble with their lives to make their own decisions. Senator Cherie Buckner-Webb told a powerful story about a friend who had an illegal abortion prior to legalization using a coat hanger and lost her fertility because of it. “It was great to see so many younger women who have always had the right, but understand the need to protect that right for their own and future generations,” said Hannah Brass Greer, PPVNW Legislative Director.

In Olympia, PPVNW brought together over 100 legislators, staff, and activists. PPVNW CEO Elaine Rose and sponsors of the Reproductive Parity Act, Senator Steve Hobbs and Representative Eileen Cody, fired up the crowd about the 2013 legislative agenda, which also includes continued funding for family planning.

In Soldotna, activists met with PPGNW CEO Christine Charbonneau and Morghan Stenson, PPGNW’s new nurse practitioner in the community. Nearly 25 activists stopped by and the group had a great discussion about Alaskan’s overwhelming support for reproductive freedom, which is not reflected in the legislature.

And, in Seattle, nearly 500 supporters attended our event with Dr. Sarah Weddington at Town Hall. Weddington was just 26 when she successfully argued Roe v. Wade before the Supreme Court. She discussed her pivotal role in advancing rights for American women with our master of ceremonies, *The Stranger’s* Cienna Madrid, and she chronicled her famous case from its inception. Also joining the program was Lee Minto, former Executive Director of Planned Parenthood of Seattle / King County, who shared pre-Roe stories, and Christine Charbonneau, who talked about Planned Parenthood’s commitment to keeping Roe the law of the land. >>



“We’ve protected women’s access to abortion for over 40 years, and we will continue to protect it. Planned Parenthood will support women in whatever decision they make...this is our promise.”



Cienna Madrid (R) interviews Dr. Sarah Weddington (L).



All eyes are on the stage at Town Hall as Cienna Madrid interviews Dr. Sarah Weddington.

Weddington filed the lawsuit after a group of University of Texas graduate students who had been helping women access abortions came to her and asked if they could be prosecuted as accomplices. Weddington, who had been practicing law for just two years, said she would go to the library and look it up. Roe was her first contested case. In later years, she asked these women why they initially came to her—they cited two reasons: she was the only female attorney they had ever heard of and she was the only one who would do it for free.

Weddington had 30 minutes to present her argument to the Supreme Court. After that, she went back to Texas and successfully ran for the State House. On January 22, 1973 she finally heard the news: “The phone rang that morning and Ann Richards, my administrative assistant (also the mother of Planned Parenthood Federation of America’s President Cecile Richards, and later the Governor of Texas), answered the phone. It was a reporter from the *New York Times*: ‘Does Ms. Weddington have a comment today about Roe v. Wade?’ Ann said, ‘Should she?’ And the reporter said, ‘It was decided today.’ Ann said, ‘...how was it decided?’ And the reporter

said, ‘She won it—7 to 2.’” Mass pandemonium ensued throughout the office.

When looking towards the future, Sarah remarked, “There are a lot of people who are younger than I who cannot remember what it was like before and that’s one of the things that is so important—we need to reach out to younger people and tell the stories.”

Lee Minto told a few of those stories. An especially heartbreaking one was about a young couple who, after having a one night stand, became pregnant. They had no intention of spending their lives together. It was just ‘one of those things’ that happened. The young man called a friend who knew of someone ‘who could help.’ He would need to bring the woman and \$400 to a hotel. To raise the money, the young man sold his car and they went to the hotel. Instead of getting an abortion, the young woman was raped and the money was stolen. Still pregnant and traumatized, the young woman ended up in the psychiatric ward of Harborview Hospital in Seattle.

“Roe gave women their choice in child bearing. Freedom of choice is essential for women and for all the men who truly care about them.

And, for all of us—those who are old and for those who are young—we all need to be reminded of what it was like in the bad old days—we simply cannot let that happen again,” said Minto.

When asked, about half of the audience remembered the time before Roe, while half raised their hands to show they did not. We hope these stories inspire those of all generations to do what they can to ensure we do not go backwards.

Charbonneau talked about the multitude of recent anti-woman attacks by politicians and the record number of bills passed by legislatures to restrict abortion and access to reproductive health care. “Women don’t turn to politicians for advice on mammograms, cancer screenings, and pre-natal care. There is no room for them in these personal medical decisions. We’ve protected women’s access to abortion for over 40 years, and we will continue to protect it. Planned Parenthood will support women in whatever decision they make—for generations to come—this is our promise.”

The energy in the Great Hall was electric. Attendees listened quietly to stories and erupted in applause—even during the video segments. •

Planned Parenthood would like to thank you for celebrating 40 years of Roe with us, and for continuing to advocate for reproductive freedom, no matter where you live!

Get your
tickets today!



An Evening with
Eve Ensler

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May 18, 2013
Benaroya Hall, Seattle

Eve Ensler, Tony Award-winning playwright and author of *The Vagina Monologues*, discusses her new book *In the Body of the World*—recounting her harrowing experience with cancer—and her ongoing commitment to protect the female body from violence. Get a personal look at the life and triumph of one of the world's most influential women.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit PPGNW.

For tickets and more information, visit seattlesymphony.org/benaroya.



What Roe Means to Me

By Cienna Madrid

The first political act of my life was attending a pro-choice rally at the age of eight on the yawning steps of Idaho's capitol. Of course, at that age, I didn't know what we were rallying for (reproductive rights) or protesting about (the unholy lack of them in Idaho). I just knew that I was welcomed by the largest, loudest pack of women I'd ever witnessed. Mothers waved signs and coached children through fun chants, kids played tag on the capitol's grassy lawn, and I was proud to be part of it all—that is, until I was called a “baby slut” by a group of people, mostly men, who were counter-protesting our efforts.

I didn't know what “slut” meant at that age but being called a “baby” was enough of an insult. I knew that these people wanted me to feel shame that I did not feel with that pack of happy, loud, feisty women. Still, I did the typical kid thing and walked over to ask my mom why I'd been called a “baby slut.” I wanted to know what it meant.

I don't remember her response, but the expression on her face when she gave it to me is burned into my brain: It was a combination of fury and helplessness. I've grown up seeing that expression on many women's faces when they talk about women's reproductive rights, because it seems that too often when the subject comes up, women are attacked. They are insulted. They are shamed and degraded. It doesn't matter whether a friend is talking about a difficult decision to have an abortion or another is talking about her boss's casual-yet-cruel judgment of her decision not to have children, the underlying social message seems to be that women's private reproductive choices are free game for public debate and censure.

Obviously, many women—including myself—disagree with that trend, and we fight it. That's what Roe v. Wade symbolizes for me—the best parts of that fight: those precious moments when women stand together in crowded rooms, or chant on capitol steps, or march through the streets, those moments when women put the full weight of their voices and their votes behind their convictions.

Cienna Madrid is a staff writer at The Stranger where she specializes in covering Seattle politics and feminist issues in Washington State.

“That's what Roe v. Wade symbolizes for me...when women put the full weight of their voices and their votes behind their convictions.”



Teen Council members meet with Senator Jeannie Darneille of the 27th District representing Tacoma.



74 youth from Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and Planned Parenthood Mt. Baker lobbying for the Reproductive Parity Act and family planning funding.

Teen Lobby Day 2013

By Jodi Bernstein, Education Manager

For the last 17 years, youth from the Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW) Teen Council program—a peer education program utilizing the passion and skills of young people to disseminate sexuality information—have brightened the Capitol Campus in Olympia as volunteer teen lobbyists. On January 21, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, 74 youth from 20 legislative districts, all clad in Planned Parenthood pink t-shirts, made their appearance. They educated their representatives and senators on two crucial issues: the Reproductive Parity Act (RPA) and the necessity to prevent cuts to family planning funding. The youth explained how the RPA would require any health insurance policy that covers maternity care to provide comparable coverage for abortion care. In their discussion about funding, the teens emphasized that for every \$1 million cut from family planning, the state incurs \$4.1 million of expenses from the cost of unintended pregnancies that same year. Many legislators expressed they were blown away by the passion and articulateness of the teens, and one representative strongly urged her teen constituents to run for office!

The PPGNW Teen Lobby day is a two-day event. Teens from eight Western Washington Teen Councils convene in Olympia for a day of training followed by a day of lobbying. They are hosted overnight in the homes of past and present Thurston County Teen Council Members. This grand collaboration between our Education and our Policy departments involves many hours of preparation and planning. This year, our keynote speaker was Gaby Rodriguez, a young woman from Toppenish, Washington who made headlines by faking her own pregnancy and sharing with her peers what she learned from her social experiment as part of her senior project in high school. PPGNW Chief Learning Officer Carole Miller and CEO Christine Charbonneau provided our closing statements, honoring the youth for their effective and amazing contributions.

“I’ll remember making a difference!”

“I had a voice and I was heard!”

“I learned how to speak in front of people—how to be confident, not nervous, and know my stuff.”

- Teen attendees’ responses to Teen Lobby Day 2013

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