

# TAKE ACTION!

## Planned Parenthood **Action** FUND

of Santa Barbara, Ventura and San Luis Obispo Counties, Inc.

### A VOICE FOR CHOICE

June 2003



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Cheryl Rollings

##### Vice President

Christine Lyon

518 Garden Street  
Santa Barbara, 93101  
(805) 963-2445 x 25  
Fax (805) 965-2292

[www.ppsbvsls.org](http://www.ppsbvsls.org)  
[www.actionfundppsbvsls.org](http://www.actionfundppsbvsls.org)

#### Message from **Action** FUND Chair – Joan Wells

*"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any". Alice Walker*

My, how things have changed since I wrote to you last fall when I was full of good news about our success in passing four important landmark reproductive rights bills that protect the women of California into law. At the federal level we were hopeful that mid-term elections would result in electing more pro-choice candidates into office.

Today, a little more than six months after the elections, anti-choice majorities continue to control both houses of Congress and the White House, and we find ourselves working harder than ever in our attempt to curb this administration's systematic effort to gut reproductive freedom in the United States and abroad.

On June 4, the House voted 282-139 to pass H.R. 760, the ban on so-called "Partial Birth Abortion Act of 2003". The President has already stated that he will sign this legislation into law.

Despite the fact that the Supreme Court struck down legislation calling for a ban on so-called "Partial-Birth Abortion" just three years ago, anti-choice members of Congress insist on advancing this legislation to influence election politics and achieve their long-term goal of overturning *Roe v. Wade*. This legislation lacks an important health exception, which the Supreme Court unequivocally said was a fatal flaw in any restriction on abortion.

Despite increasing demand for family planning services as more and more families are squeezed by the struggling economy, President Bush's budget proposal for 2004 provides no increase for Title X family planning funding. However, he does propose an 83% increase in funding for "abstinence-only" education grants. "Abstinence-only" education programs fail to provide accurate information about preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections and have not been proven to delay or reduce sexual activity.

Late last year the National Institute of Health and the Centers for Disease Control removed scientifically accurate information about condoms, contraception, abortion and safer sex from government websites. Now, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has joined these efforts to censor.

Stacking the courts with conservative judges is a top priority of this Administration. Nominees previously rejected by the Judiciary Committee are again being nominated for confirmation to lifetime appointments now that anti-choice majorities control the Senate. If they succeed in stacking the courts, anti-choice policies will remain in place long after this Administration is gone and will impact future generations for decades to come.

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Here in California, we are facing the largest state budget deficit in our history. If the cuts proposed in the May Revise are approved by the Legislature our education programs and clinical services will be dramatically impacted. Our staff and volunteers have signed hundreds of letters to legislators, requesting that funding for family planning remain intact. ***Our advocacy and lobbying activities have never been more important than they are now.***

Many thanks to those of you who have responded to our e-mail action alerts. As of May 8, Senator Feinstein had received 21,367 faxes, telephone calls, letters and postcards opposing 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals nominee Carolyn Kuhl.

As we look ahead, maintaining a pro-choice majority in the California Legislature and electing a pro-choice President in 2004 are our priorities. The *Action* FUND Board has set a goal of raising \$125,000 to implement an aggressive electoral agenda. Term-limits will create open Senate and Assembly seats throughout the tri-counties in 2004.

On a personal note, my tenure as Chair has been both fulfilling and productive and I hope you will join me in welcoming and supporting Janet Wolf as the new *Action* Fund Board Chair.

We are counting on your continued support. Together we can prevent the erosion of reproductive rights.

Sincerely,

Joan Wells, Chair

## PERSONAL PROFILE

**JANET WOLF, PLANNED PARENTHOOD *ACTION* FUND OF SANTA BARBARA, VENTURA AND SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTIES BOARD CHAIR**



Janet joined the *Action* FUND Board in July of 2001 and last year served as Vice Chair. She is an active member of the Fundraising Committee and Co-Chair of "Politics, Sex & Cocktails", our annual fundraising event where we honor individuals for "sticking their necks out" for choice with our Planned Parenthood Giraffe Award. A long-time political activist, Janet began her own political career in 1993 when she was elected to the Board of Trustees for the Goleta Union School District. She is currently serving her third term in office.

As an advocate for children, Janet believes that every child should have access to a quality education and information that will enable them to make educated and informed decisions about their lives.

"I believe that providing students with comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education will enable them to make life-saving decisions," she says. And, as the mother of three daughters, Janet wholeheartedly supports the work of Planned Parenthood and believes that women have the right to determine their own destiny.

In her professional life, Janet works as a vocational rehabilitation counselor with offices in Santa Barbara and Santa Maria. She evaluates and assists individuals with disabilities striving to return to work. Her practice also involves assisting women reentering the workforce following divorce.

In addition to spending time with family and friends, volunteering for her many causes, serving on the Goleta Union School Board and cooking, Janet loves the challenge of playing, and attempting to stay alive, on the "Black" team of the Santa Barbara Women's Hockey League.

Staff and volunteers look forward with enthusiasm to working under Janet's leadership next year as the Chair of the *Action* FUND Board.

## **EFFORTS TO RECALL DAVIS HEAT UP!**

**OPPOSITION TO THE ATTEMPTED RECALL OF GOV. GRAY DAVIS GAINED MOMENTUM ON JUNE 10 AS PRO-CHOICE ORGANIZATIONS HELD PRESS CONFERENCES THROUGHOUT THE STATE TO HIGHLIGHT THE THREAT THE RECALL POSES TO REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS.**

# CALIFORNIA STATE BUDGET OVERVIEW

On May 15<sup>th</sup> the governor presented the May Revise to the California Legislature. The May Revise is an updated version of the budget that reflects changes in the economy and actions taken by the legislature. California's \$38.2 billion deficit is the largest in the history of the state. Still contained in the Revise is the Governor's proposal to make a 15 percent reduction in Medi-Cal provider rates. If this reduction in revenue is passed, it will create significant barriers to Californians in terms of access to family planning services. Cutting family planning funding is penny wise and pound foolish!

## Family planning services save California money in the long run.

For every \$1 on family planning, an estimated \$4.48 is saved in future medical and social costs through the prevention of unintended pregnancies.

## Family planning services receive a 90/10 federal match.

90% of our most important services are funded by federal dollars. A 15% rate cut represents an estimated loss of \$40 million dollars in federal matching funds.

California has one of the lowest reimbursement rates in the country and to reduce them further would cause providers like Planned Parenthood to discontinue services to many low-income patients.

*Please help us preserve services and programs that prevent unintended pregnancies by calling your state representatives now! Urge them to oppose budget cuts in Medi-Cal provider rates that will impact the lives of low-income families.*

**Assemblymember Hannah-Beth Jackson:**  
564-1647 or 648-9943

**Assemblymember Keith Richman:** 818-368-3838

**Assemblymember Abel Maldonado:** 549-3381

**Assemblymember Tony Strickland:** 987-5195

**Assemblymember Fran Pavley:** 818-596-4141

**Senator Tom McClintock:** 494-8808

**Senator Sheila James Kuehl:** 310-441-9084

**Senator Bruce McPherson:** 831-425-0401

*To receive updates on the budget, important legislative issues, and to keep abreast of critical votes in Congress and the State Legislature join the Rapid Alert Network at [www.ppsbvslo.org](http://www.ppsbvslo.org)  
Link: [www.loa.ca.gov](http://www.loa.ca.gov)*

# CAPITOL DAY



(AF Board member Loretta Redd with PPSBVSLO staff, volunteers, and VOX students)

Despite 101-degree temperatures, this year's Capitol Day was a huge success. A sea of white tee-shirts emblazoned with "STAND UP FOR CHOICE" worn by almost 500 Planned Parenthood staff, volunteers and activists, gathered in front of the State Capitol as a stream of legislators took the microphone to voice their support of our mission. Thirteen activists from our PPSBVSLO affiliate lobbied representatives from throughout the tri-counties asking them to preserve funding for family planning and teen pregnancy prevention programs and to vote for important sex education legislation. A weary but invigorated group returned home determined to continue to work to preserve reproductive choice.

## MARCH FOR FREEDOM OF CHOICE

WASHINGTON, DC • APRIL 25, 2004

Join 999,999 other reproductive rights activists in Washington, DC for a March for Freedom of Choice. Online activism is great, but on-site activism is better. When George W. Bush sees the biggest-ever group of energetic, outspoken, and take-no-prisoners champions for choice, he will be hardpressed to ignore this vocal constituency.

For more information: [www.saveROE.com](http://www.saveROE.com)

## SAVE THE DATE! SATURDAY SEPT. 13<sup>TH</sup>

SB PRO-CHOICE COALITION "GREAT AMERICAN WRITE-IN"

On September 13, 2003, the Santa Barbara Pro-Choice Coalition will launch its first annual "Great American Write-in" from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Society. This event will provide a space for coalition partners, including the *Action FUND*, to meet each other, distribute materials, share ideas and make our voices heard. Show your support for the Pro-Choice Coalition's effort to mobilize its membership in defense of the laws protecting reproductive freedom.

### FACT:

President Bush's proposed budget FY 2004 provides no increase for Title X family planning programs, but does increase "abstinence - only" education grants 83% over 2002 levels.

# LEGISLATIVE WATCH

## DEMYSTIFYING SEX EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA

California sex education law is in dire need of reform if the state's educators are to provide students with consistent and comprehensive information about sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy and healthy attitudes about sexuality.

Senator Sheila Kuehl has introduced SB 71, California Comprehensive Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Education Act, sponsored by Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California. The bill would clarify and simplify sex education guidelines to ensure that sex education in California public schools is comprehensive, medically accurate and free of bias. This bill will:

- ◆ Unify the currently scattered statutes on sex education and HIV/AIDS prevention into one new section of the Education Code to eliminate contradictions and provide clearer definitions and requirements for sex education curricula.
- ◆ Require that sex education instruction stress the value of abstinence from sexual intercourse as the only certain way to prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections while not ignoring the needs of those young people who have been or are sexually active.
- ◆ Ensure that English-language learners and students with disabilities are provided with comprehensive sexual health education, and that sexual health education is culturally sensitive and free from bias.
- ◆ Retain the current framework that requires HIV/AIDS prevention education in grades 7-12, allow districts the option to teach sex education outside the context of HIV/AIDS prevention for grades K-12, and ensure that sex education instruction continues to be medically accurate and age appropriate.

Link: [www.ca.leginfo.org](http://www.ca.leginfo.org)

## INCREASING ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

**SB 490(Alpert):** Senator Alpert's legislation would authorize a pharmacist to initiate emergency contraception drug therapy in accordance with a standardized procedure or protocol approved by the State Board of Pharmacy, expediting and simplifying the process of obtaining time-sensitive emergency contraception.

**AB 996(Wiggins):** Planned Parenthood is co-sponsoring Assemblymember Wiggins' legislation that bars insurance companies from canceling, refusing to renew or requiring an unreasonable increase in the premiums for a claim made against the policy as a result of a hate crime committed against an employee, contractor, volunteer, or patient affiliated with a reproductive health services facility, or administrative office, ensuring that reproductive health clinics are not burdened with unfair and debilitating insurance costs.

# JUDICIAL UPDATE

The US Senate's constitutional role to "advise and consent" on federal court nominations is a critical component in ensuring philosophical balance on the high courts. Unfortunately, the current list of nominees to the federal appellate courts tips the courts towards an ideological agenda that includes overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Further, recent federal appellate court nominees have been rushed through the nomination process – often grouped in hearings that do not allow sufficient time for thoughtful examination of their judicial records and opinions.

On May 8, 2003 the Senate Judiciary Committee voted 10-9 along party lines to approve the nomination of Judge Carolyn Kuhl to the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. It will now head to the Senate floor for consideration. Judge Kuhl is hostile to reproductive freedom and has a troubling record on federal enforcement of civil rights. She has been a vigorous advocate for overturning *Roe v. Wade* and supports giving tax-exempt status to a university that openly discriminates. The *Action* FUND opposes this nomination.

The *Action* FUND urges confirmation of only those nominees who receive complete consideration and evidence a commitment to fundamental rights, including reproductive rights.

Courtesy of [www.benchmarkcampaign.org](http://www.benchmarkcampaign.org)

## ANTI-CHOICE NOMINATIONS

- ◆ Judge Carolyn Kuhl, an opponent of *Roe v. Wade* with an alarmingly dubious record in civil rights cases, is being considered by the Senate for a seat in the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals.
- ◆ Democrats continue to filibuster the nomination of Miguel Estrada, a Republican hopeful for a seat on the DC District Court, who refuses to state his stance on several key issues, including abortion rights.
- ◆ Two votes for cloture have not stopped the Democrats' filibuster on the nomination of Priscilla Owen for the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals. In hearings for a previous unsuccessful nomination and the current one, Owen has consistently expressed and demonstrated opposition to reproductive rights.
- ◆ President Bush has renominated Judge Charles Pickering for the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals despite being previously rejected by the Senate for his hostile record on civil and reproductive rights.

Read more about these and other troubling nominees at [www.benchmarkcampaign.org](http://www.benchmarkcampaign.org)

## POLITICS, SEX & COCKTAILS



(Assemblymember Hannah-Beth Jackson, Senator Sheila James Kuehl, Board Chair Joan Wells with Giraffe Awards)

The *Action* FUND hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Politics, Sex & Cocktails, where almost two hundred supporters turned out to honor California Senator Sheila James Kuehl and Assemblymember Hannah-Beth Jackson for co-sponsoring SB 1301, The Reproductive Privacy Act with the Giraffe Award for sticking their necks out. El Descanso, the beautiful home of Ray Winn and Peter Kavonian, provided the setting for sumptuous samplings of sweet and savory delights provided courtesy of Tina Takaya and Richard Yates of Brigitte's Restaurant. Michael Schmidtchen and Linda Thompson generously provided the wine.

## CO-SPONSORING EVENTS

- ◆ **Roe v. Wade 30th Anniversary:** The *Action* FUND co-sponsored a number of celebrations throughout the tri-counties:
  - ◆ **Clergy For Choice** Worship Service
  - ◆ **Santa Barbara Pro-Choice Coalition**  
"Testimonials of Choice"
  - ◆ **UCSB VOX** "Life, Liberty & the Pursuit of Happiness"
  - ◆ **UCSB Women's Studies Dept.:** Ricky Solinger's Speech  
Beggars & Choosers: Motherhood is Not a Class Privilege in America
  - ◆ **Ventura County Reproductive Rights Network (VCRRN)**  
"Voices of Choice"
  - ◆ **SLO Pro-Choice Coalition** "Testimonial Readings"
- ◆ **Clergy For Choice** sex education program "Talking to Your Child About Sexuality in the Context of Faith" March 2, 2003
- ◆ **Capitol Day Sacramento-** May 28, 2003
- ◆ **Women's Political Committee** "Campaign Skills Training Workshop" May 17, 2003
- ◆ **The Santa Barbara Pro-Choice Coalition** "Great American Write-In" September 13, 2003

## ANTI-CHOICE WATCH

### SENATE AND HOUSE DENY SERVICEWOMEN ABORTION RIGHTS

In late May, both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate defeated amendments by Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) and Senators Murray (D-WA) and Snowe (R-ME), respectively, to restore access to privately funded abortion services for U.S. military women and military dependents overseas.

More than 100,000 women living on American military bases overseas are currently prohibited from obtaining abortion services in military hospitals, even if the abortion is paid for with private funds.

### TEXAS DEFIES SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

Despite conclusive evidence from leading scientists and the National Cancer Institute of the National Institutes of Health that there is no link between abortion and breast cancer, the Texas state legislature passed a bill requiring that doctors tell women seeking abortion of a possible link between abortion and breast cancer. The bill is likely to be signed into law by Republican Governor Rick Perry.

### EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION UNDER ATTACK

"In mid-May, a legislative committee in Madison, WI, approved a bill that permits pharmacists to refuse to fill many prescriptions, including those for emergency contraception. Rep. Carol Owens, R-Oshkosh, sponsor of the bill, said the legislation models a South Dakota law that protects pharmacists from being sued or fired if they refuse to provide drugs used for abortion, suicide, or euthanasia. Opponents argue the bill would allow pharmacists to refuse to fill birth control prescriptions if they have moral objections to women taking such medications."

*From The Associated Press (Wisconsin), "Committee endorses conscience bill for pharmacists," May 14, 2003*

### UPDATE ON THE "BUSH CHRONICLES"

**January 2003:** USAID website is censored and links to resource organizations that support legal abortion, including Planned Parenthood, are removed by order of the Bush Administration.

**February 3, 2003:** President Bush's proposed budget for fiscal year 2004 provides no increase for the Title X family planning program, yet increases funding for unproven abstinence-only education grants 83% over 2002 levels. His budget also denies funding for abortion services to women in prison (except in cases of rape or health endangerment), poor women and federal employees.

**March 13, 2003:** The U.S. Senate passes an abortion ban with no exception for a woman's health. The so-called "Partial Birth Abortion Act of 2003" is in direct conflict with *Roe* and *Stenberg v. Carhart*, a case in which the Supreme Court ruled a nearly identical ban unconstitutional. The President has promised to sign the ban into law.

## VOX STUDENTS CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

### IMPORTANT ACTION LINKS!

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

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

[www.saveroe.com](http://www.saveroe.com)

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

[www.covermypills.com](http://www.covermypills.com)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



UCSB VOX celebrated Earth Day on April 27 by distributing information about Planned Parenthood, recruiting over 70 signatures to support the preservation of Medi-Cal provider rates, and increasing public awareness of reproductive rights at the bustling festival held at the Santa Barbara Courthouse Sunken Gardens.

Newsletter edited by Page Schindler

Planned Parenthood *Action*  
FUND of Santa Barbara,  
Ventura and San Luis Obispo  
Counties, Inc.  
518 Garden Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**BE A VOICE FOR CHOICE**

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### TAKE ACTION NOW!

- ✓ *Donate to the Action FUND*
- ✓ *Join a committee*
- ✓ *Join the RAN e-mail network*
- ✓ *Volunteer: Call 963-2445 x 51*
- ✓ *Contact your legislators*
- ✓ *Register to vote*
- ✓ *Elect pro-choice candidates to local, state and federal offices*

*HELP US TO COMPLETE OUR WORK  
BY DONATING TODAY!*