

Kathleen's Letter to La Crosse Diocesan Newspaper October, 2006

To the Editor:

During the campaign I have been attacked as 'pro-life, Catholic and unfit to be a Democrat'. Last week I was attacked as not pro-life enough. I find it strange that I am attacked by both sides.

I have publicly discussed abortion many times. Those who state otherwise have not had the opportunity to hear me. I invite them to attend one of the dozens of house parties and public meetings that we've held around the 31st state Senate District. I have spent many hours explaining how we can all work together to make abortion rare.

I have proposed several policy actions that we need to take to reduce unplanned pregnancies and abortions. I do not believe women who have an abortion should be put in jail. Ultimately, every pregnant woman has a choice. While we may disagree, we must respect her choice.

Women have told me very sad stories about how they have felt that they had no choice but to have an abortion. This is a tragedy and a failure by both individuals and our society. When a woman is pregnant we need to open wide our hearts and the doors of our social services. As church members and neighbors we need to reach out to women in need. As a society we need to provide for our most vulnerable. Through health care, child care, food, housing and a good paying job, we can do better in making sure women who are pregnant have what they need to keep mother and baby safe and healthy.

We need to work to prevent unplanned pregnancies whenever possible. We know that more than half of the unplanned pregnancies result from the few women who do not use women's health services. We can do better at reaching women with health services.

Our campaign is not about division, but about unity. To solve real problems, we much reach across the aisle and across town and join with those who might not think exactly as we do.

Kathleen Vinehout
Candidate, 31st State Senate District