



WHO/OHIO

Women Have Options/Ohio

Spring 2009

WHO/O Annual Meeting

Sunday, March 8th 2009

5-7 P.M.

Please join Women Have Options and Denison University's Students for Choice in recognizing central Ohio's clinic personnel and thanking our donors for support.

Bring a friend and enjoy light refreshments while hearing clinic personnel talk about their work and the women they serve.

**Burton Morgan, Welsh Hills Room
Denison University**

WHO/O supporters believe every woman...

...has the right to make her own decision about an unwanted pregnancy.

...has the ability to make a responsible choice based on her own circumstances and values; and

...has the right to receive safe, legal professional health care.

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President Obama Overturns Global Gag Rule on Day Three of Administration

The day after the 36th Roe anniversary, President Obama overturned the global gag rule--also called the "Mexico City Policy"--that prohibits health service agencies receiving U.S. foreign aid from mentioning abortion, counseling on the full spectrum of reproductive options, or referring to abortion services. The policy also prohibited US federal funding for any organizations that advocated for safe and legal abortion. The rule was originally announced by President Reagan during a visit to Mexico City in 1984. It was overturned by President Bill Clinton, then reinstated again by President George W. Bush in 2001.

The consequences of the global gag rule have been deadly. According to a health activist in Ghana, "high rates of unwanted pregnancy lead to adolescents seeking out risky abortions that are performed in deplorable and unsanitary conditions. In a country where there is a critical need to expand comprehensive reproductive health services, an estimated 600,000 men and women have lost access to family planning services, counseling and HIV/AIDS prevention education when courageous local family planning clinics refused to sign the gag rule."

In a statement, President Obama said: "In the coming weeks, my administration will initiate a fresh conversation on family planning, working to find areas of common ground to best meet the needs of women and families at home and around the world."

Federal law still prohibits U.S. funds to be spent on performing abortions anywhere in the world.

Look at What We Accomplished in 2007-2008

In 2007, WHO/O assisted 364 women in the light gray counties; in 2008, adding 11 counties (dark gray), we helped 410 women.

Since its inception, WHO/O has assisted more than 1,900 women throughout Ohio.

A snapshot of some of the people we helped in 2008.

- ⇒ A heroine addict waiting for a bed in an in-patient rehab facility
- ⇒ A victim of domestic violence, suffering from cranial neuralgia due to a car accident
- ⇒ A mentally challenged woman living on the edge of society and selling her blood to survive
- ⇒ A woman with two young children whose father—also the father of her unborn child—was killed in a car accident
- ⇒ Two girls, twelve and fourteen years old
- ⇒ Numerous low income teenagers who have received subsidized emergency contraception
- ⇒ A victim of domestic violence with two small children, in hiding from her partner who molested her daughter
- ⇒ A woman whose unborn child had a fetal anomaly (part of the head was missing)
- ⇒ An unemployed woman who already has five children



Treasurer's Report

Through the generosity of its donors, Women Have Options gave \$24,550 to 15 Ohio clinics that provide reproductive health services to women. This support helped these clinics serve 410 women, a 35% increase in the number of women assisted by WHO/O's funds in 2007.

WHO/O's 2008 spring campaign attracted 33 new donors while receiving increased support from many previous donors. Our fall non-event campaign also contributed to our financial strength.



We were fortunate to receive funds from other sources as well. Two foundations awarded WHO/O grants to be used in our support of reproductive health clinics. In addition, Capital Care Women's Center designated WHO/O as its recipient of donations made at its 2008 Roe v Wade dinner.

Women Have Options, like all other non-profits, is concerned that the current economic climate may adversely affect its ability to provide adequate funding support for clinics. However, we also know that our donors are aware of the importance of our funding to these clinics and are committed to the women of Ohio as they struggle with reproductive decisions in an economy in recession.

A Recession in Funding

This past week at the clinic I realized that telling potential patients funding is very limited has become routine. Both The Delaware Pro-choice Medical Fund and The Abortion Rights Fund of Western Massachusetts have stopped funding nationally. This is significant in that all of the agencies I work with, excepting Women Have Options, are out of state. This means that when funds are low or the economy is struggling, funding agencies have an obligation to keep the local population as their priority.

Currently I have been relying on only two out-of-state funding agencies, The Women's Reproductive Rights Assistance Project and The Third Wave Foundation. Third Wave can by far contribute larger amounts for patients; however, Third Wave as agency focuses on the direst cases and has age restrictions that limit the patients who can qualify for assistance.

Recently WRRAP has limited how many patients from each clinic can receive funding per week. As a consequence, Patient Advocates are frequently forced to choose among the neediest patients. Most of the time ALL patients who need funding are unemployed, receive food stamps,

and already have children. And Medicaid does not cover elective abortions.

Last week I had a pair of sisters who were both in the second trimester and both needed financial assistance. Each sister came to her dilator appointment but only one sister was able to afford the procedure. The other sister had to reschedule to come up with the balance. Each week the cost of the procedure increases and the procedure becomes more painful. Many women feel caught in a desperate "Catch 22."

This week our clinic ran out of our quarterly grant from Women Have Options. The rest of the quarter will be difficult, considering that January through March is our peak season. The rate of abortion in Ohio may be declining, but in a recession the need for financial assistance is ever greater. We all have the highest hopes that President Obama will be able to make change happen. Until then, please continue to donate for Choice! We would not be able to do it without your help!

By Andrea Martinez, Patient Advocate
Capital Care Women's Center (Columbus)

TRUST WOMEN

Family Planning Money Dropped from the Stimulus Package

Under pressure from Congressional Republicans, President Obama and Speaker Pelosi stepped back from an exciting provision in the federal stimulus package.

From RH Reality Check:

The economic stimulus package has been finalized, and it does not include the straightforward provision allowing states to extend Medicaid coverage for family planning services to low-income residents without first obtaining a time-consuming waiver from the federal government. . . .

Women are losing their jobs; with their jobs, they say goodbye to their health insurance; with that, their ability to afford contraception. As they downsize and plan how to cover costs in the future, doesn't it seem like a good idea for them to know how many kids they're including in the household budget?

At \$200 million, the family planning provision represented less than one-quarter of one percent of the entire \$800 billion stimulus package.

According to the New York Times, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the provision would actually save the government \$200 million over five years by reducing pregnancy and postnatal-care expenses.

Women Have Options/Ohio

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We're on the Web!
www.womenhaveoptions.org



**The Mission of Women Have Options/Ohio
is to support the right of every woman to
make her own reproductive decisions.**

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Justice requires that all women be able to make personal decisions about childbearing.

Please join us in our commitment to women's lives and futures. Your tax-deductible contribution enables women in our community to get help when they need it. Any amount is appreciated! Please send your contribution to:

Women Have Options, PO Box 5, Granville, OH 43023

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____

- I would like more information about WHO/O.
- I would like to help with special events.
- I would like to help with the newsletter.
- Add my friend's name and address to your mailing list: _____

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

*Contributions to WHO/O can be made through **United Way** by choosing the Donor Option and naming Women Have Options to receive your dollars. You can also make donations directly on our website: www.womenhaveoptions.com.*