

Campaign Finance Reform

The Problem

In Nevada, as elsewhere, the money poured into political campaigns from special interest groups drives the system. Nevada legislators receive pitifully small compensation for the work they do in Carson City in each biennial session. Lawmakers are paid \$7,800 in salary for the 120-day session and very modest amounts for per diem and travel expenses. Much more money flows to the legislators in the form of campaign finance contributions from special interest groups with deep pockets. Those who hold leadership positions are especially favored with this support.

Justices of the Nevada Supreme Court are publicly elected, which means every six years (or earlier) they must solicit money from their friends and colleagues to prepare for the next election. We believe it is a conflict of interest for attorneys to make campaign contributions to judges and then argue cases before those same judges, who do not need to disqualify themselves when a former contributor becomes a litigant before the highest bench in Nevada. The appearance of impartiality and fairness is shattered. A first step in addressing this would be with publicly funded Supreme Court races.

In a 1998 case Justice Robert Rose wrote (in *O'Brien v. State Bar of Nevada*, 114 Nev. Jan. 1998, 78): "Every judicial candidate I have known was grateful for contributions made by lawyers, large or small. However, there does come a point when the amount of money contributed creates an appearance of impropriety, especially when a judge is ruling or voting on an issue critical to the lawyer contributor...."

The Current Situation

Common Cause/Nevada and PLAN recently released a report "The Supreme Jackpot" that looked at campaign contributions to Nevada Supreme Court Justices from 1998 through 2002. It also examined more than 300 state Supreme Court cases to find out if the same people who gave campaign contributions then appeared with

litigation before the justices. The entire report is available on-line at www.planevada.org

Key Findings of "The Supreme Jackpot:"

- The seven sitting justices raised a total of \$1,562,421 to win their seats, even though most ran unopposed. Contributions examined were from the justices' most recent election campaigns.
- Two groups gave nearly 70% of the total contributions to Supreme Court Justices: lawyers & lobbyists gave the most – \$622,699 or 39.9%; casinos gave \$458,732 or 29.4%.
- Eight out of the top ten donors had cases before the Nevada Supreme Court.
- In 50% of the court cases examined, at least one party made a campaign contribution to Supreme Court Justices. Of the cases that involved no campaign contributions, most were criminal cases.
- The average amount raised to win a seat on the Nevada Supreme Court keeps going up: from 1998 to 2002 it went up 82.26%, an increase of \$141,648.
Average amount raised in 1998: \$172,197
Average amount raised in 2000: \$196,779
Average amount raised in 2002: \$313,845

Clean Money Campaign Reform

The Clean Money Campaign Reform program offers full public financing to candidates for state office who reject special interest money to finance campaigns. It is strictly voluntary, in accordance with U.S. Supreme Court rulings. Funds for such public financing are designed to come from fines and fees, not from taxes paid by citizens.

Candidates who do not wish to participate are able to raise and spend private money for their campaigns as they do today. In order to maintain a level financial playing field, Clean Money candidates who are outspent by privately financed opponents are entitled to a limited amount of matching funds.

Submitted by Common Cause/Nevada and the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN)

Nevada Can Do Better

- Adopt the Clean Money Campaign Finance Reform program.
- Lower the maximum contribution limit from one donor from \$5,000 in the primary and \$5,000 in the general to \$1,000 in each race.
- Outlaw bundling (aggregate contributions by one corporation or organization through its subsidiaries).
- Establish a blue ribbon committee to examine the funding of judicial campaigns.

Death Penalty

The Problem

Nevada's death penalty is flawed and unfair. Nevada has America's highest percentage of any states' population on death row. Nevada's death penalty is racially biased against African-Americans. Almost 40% of those on Nevada's death row are African-American, although African-Americans are only 8% of the state's population. State law allows juveniles to be executed in Nevada, and Nevada prosecutors have tried to impose the death penalty numerous times for juvenile defendants. The list of statutory aggravating factors, at least one of which must be present and proved to impose the death penalty, is so broad that virtually any homicide in Nevada could result in the death penalty. This is completely contrary to the notion the society's harshest punishment should be reserved for the worst murderers.

These and other injustices raise grave concerns about the fundamental fairness of Nevada's death penalty. All of Nevada's approximately 85 death row inmates are poor and unable to afford to hire an appeal attorney. Prosecutors – with no oversight by judges – have the *sole* power to decide in which cases they will seek the death penalty. Politics, the county in which one is prosecuted, the defendant's and the victim's race and ethnicity, and the quality of the defense attorney all play a significant role in these decisions. Court rules are slanted to increase the odds of a guilty verdict if the prosecutor is seeking the death penalty, and increase the odds that a convicted person will receive a death sentence.

Legislative reforms in 2003 did not "fix" Nevada's death penalty.

Despite some significant changes to Nevada's death penalty laws during the 2003 session, many serious problems remain. If Nevada continues to have a death penalty, we must correct these serious flaws and increase the process' fairness. While we pursue continued improvements to the system, we should impose a moratorium on executions until all reforms have been implemented and evaluated. **If we cannot make**

Nevada's death penalty fair and reasonable, then we should substitute life imprisonment without possibility of parole as Nevada's most severe punishment.

Current Laws

Nevada is one of 38 states that permit a death sentence for first degree murder. In the other 12 states – 24% of America – the maximum punishment for first degree murder is life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. In addition to the death penalty, Nevada law also provides for life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

In Nevada juveniles are eligible for the death penalty even if their crimes were committed when they were under 18 years of age.

Gaps In The Law

During Nevada's 2003 legislative session, the Legislature made some important changes to Nevada's death penalty laws. The Legislature eliminated 3-judge panels, which had been able to – and usually did – sentence defendants to death when juries were unable to reach a unanimous sentencing decision or when a defendant pleaded guilty to first degree murder. The United States Supreme Court determined that these panels unconstitutionally deprived defendants of their right to trial and sentencing by a jury. While eliminating these panels was a step forward, there are still many individuals on Nevada's Death Row who were sentenced by these panels under the old law. Both the Nevada Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court have said that these individuals cannot be re-sentenced by a jury, even though they were sentenced under a system now considered unconstitutional.

The 2003 Legislature also banned the execution of defendants with mental retardation. This was another significant step forward for fairness in the death penalty, although we must ensure that the new ban is effectively implemented. Other vulnerable populations with similar attrib-

utes still remain subject to Nevada's death penalty. Nevada is among a minority of states that permit the death penalty for juveniles who were 16 or 17 at the time of their crime. Only a handful of countries in the world are barbaric enough to authorize the execution of minors. Shamefully, Nevada is among them. We must eliminate this practice to bring Nevada into the civilized world of the 21st century.

Another category of offenders still subject to the death penalty is people with serious mental health problems, although they are not mentally retarded. Scientific research, as well as common sense, tells us that minors and people with serious mental health problems are simply not as culpable as mature adults because of incomplete brain development and reduced mental capacity. These people are also ideal candidates for alternative treatments and punishments. The death penalty is supposed to be reserved for the worst of the worst criminals. Even though youth and mental illness do not excuse these crimes, it is inappropriate and unfair to impose society's harshest and most irreversible punishment on these immature and disabled individuals.

In 2003, the Legislature failed to adopt two bills recommended by the bipartisan, bicameral legislative committee that studied Nevada's death penalty. Without these reforms, Nevada's death penalty system cannot be considered fair or reasonable. They are: (1) narrowing the list of aggravating factors that can qualify a first degree homicide case for death penalty eligibility; and (2) changing the order of attorneys' arguments in a death penalty sentencing hearing, so that the defendant argues last.

Another possible legislative proposal from prosecutors would restrict the rights of defendants to challenge their convictions or sentences with claims of unconstitutional violations of their rights. The Legislature should reject any efforts to restrict defendants' access to courts to challenge government wrongdoing. These challenges often lead to reversals of convictions or cancellations of death sentences. Restrictions on these challenges can prevent court reviews that are

Nevada Can Do Better

- Prohibit the imposition of a death sentence on juveniles who were under 18 years of age at the time of their crime.
- Reject any new limitations on defendants' rights to challenge government wrongdoing in their convictions or sentences.
- Impose a moratorium on executions in Nevada at least until the proposed reforms have been implemented and evaluated and at least until the Nevada Supreme Court has addressed the concerns referred to it in December 2002 by the legislative subcommittee that studied Nevada's death penalty.

necessary to protect against executing an innocent person or a person who should not have been sentenced to death. Nationally, more than one hundred Death Row inmates have been exonerated; all of these cases involved extensive post-conviction investigation and advocacy. We must preserve post-conviction rights and remedies to avoid wrongful convictions and sentences.

Submitted by the National Association of Social Workers, Nevada Chapter, the American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada, and the Nevada Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

Family Fairness

The Problem

In addition to the “traditional” family consisting of a husband and wife with or without children, there are other types of families in Nevada: unmarried couples, with or without children; families in which the primary caretaker is a grandparent; single parent families; stepparent families; and families with gay or lesbian parents. Families can no longer be defined in the traditional sense but are instead defined by love and commitment. Unfortunately, some of these “nontraditional” families do not share some of the legal rights and benefits that are enjoyed by the husband-wife family model. Because many of our laws contemplate the husband-wife family model, the result is the denial of basic rights for the many life-long committed relationships made by this group of productive citizens.

Current Laws

Over the last half century, through often-painful struggles, the United States has rejected discrimination against people of color, people of differing religions, races and national origin, and women. We have also progressed in eliminating discrimination based on physical or mental disability. We have become a stronger and more inclusive nation by doing so.

The 1999 Nevada Legislature provided protection for all Nevadans when it passed a bill barring discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation. This was a courageous and historic step toward ensuring equal and fair treatment of all Nevadans and their families.

Unfortunately in 2002, through the ballot initiative process, Nevadans voted to amend our state constitution to reinforce the statutory definition of marriage and affirm that only a marriage between a man and a woman will be recognized by this state. Proponents of this amendment repeatedly stated that they did not intend to discriminate against gays and lesbians. However, the legal status of marriage is linked to many rights and benefits under Nevada and federal law:

- Hospital visitation rights
- Inheritance rights
- Custody and visitation rights
- Adoption rights
- Health care benefits
- Family medical leave
- Survivor benefits that flow from worker’s compensation
- Social security benefits
- Victims of crime funds

The passage of ballot Question 2, which simply defined marriage as between a man and a woman, must not be construed as a vote to limit the constitutional rights of families that do not fall within the husband-wife family model. The 2003 Nevada legislature passed, and the governor signed, a bill enabling unmarried couples to designate a significant other to have hospital visitation rights. While these couples are grateful for this step towards equality, at this rate equality might be achieved by the 2021 legislative session. If Nevada law permitted civil unions as an alternative to marriage, these couples and their families could achieve separate but equal rights and benefits in one session.

Gaps in Laws

Many of our state statutes and regulations define “immediate family” to include spouse, siblings, children and grandchildren, father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, as well as some in-law relationships. Such a limited definition of family denies basic human rights that are provided to, and taken for granted by, married couples. It is hard to imagine that a court could remove a child from the loving home of an unmarried couple when the birth or adoptive parent dies, but such an event has occurred. The exclusion of domestic partners and their children from health care coverage results in real hardships. The denial of fundamental rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and other un-

married couples leads to painful injustices. These families deserve the same rights as others already receiving rights, benefits and statutory protection.

Nevada does not recognize domestic partnerships or civil unions and does not extend rights and benefits enjoyed by the husband-wife family model to all Nevada families regardless of the gender or marital status of the couple. A simple domestic partner form would distinguish those committed relationships that far exceed mere cohabitation. Such a form need not consider whether a couple is married or even eligible to marry. Of course a comprehensive civil union statute would better ensure that these families receive equal treatment under Nevada's laws.

Elizabeth and Gabrielle's Story

Elizabeth and Gabrielle have been in a committed, long-term relationship for over twelve years. After four years of discussion and planning, they finally decided to have children and that Elizabeth would be artificially inseminated. The couple and their families joyously welcomed the births of Ryan and then Zane, four years later. Ryan and Zane recognize both women as their mommies. However, because only married couples or a single person (not two single persons together) can adopt under Nevada law, Gabrielle cannot adopt them, she is not a member of the "immediate family." While Gabrielle has guardianship of the children, this status does not place her within the definition of "immediate family." Gabrielle was not able to utilize the family medical leave act for Ryan or Zane's birth.

A few years ago, there was a fatal shooting just outside the front doors of Gabrielle's jobsite. If she is killed at her job, neither Elizabeth nor their children will receive survivor benefits through worker's compensation, social security or victims of crime funds. Neither Elizabeth nor the children will be able to file a wrongful death lawsuit – they are not members of her family under Nevada law. While Elizabeth has executed a will clearly expressing her wishes that Gabrielle continue parenting their children, unlike an adoption decree, such a document is subject to challenge at the time of her death.

Nevada Can Do Better

- Extend spousal rights and benefits to all domestic partners.
- Require that state personnel regulations include domestic partners in the definition of "immediate family."
- Expand the statutory definition of spouse to include domestic partners or incorporate the term "domestic partner" in applicable existing laws that confer rights and benefits to a spouse.
- Create a civil union statutory process that enables couples to receive the same rights and benefits that married couples receive under Nevada's laws.

Submitted by the National Association of Social Workers, Nevada Chapter; Nevada Women's Lobby; Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada; and SPECTRUM Northern Nevada.

Juvenile Justice

The Problem

Violent juvenile crime has declined in Nevada, as it has nationally. Overall case numbers have dropped slightly. Nevada's juvenile justice system is nonetheless taxed by limited community-based services available to identify and offer treatment and alternative activities to children and families requiring support for their health and success. Nowhere is this more evident than in the area of mental health. Sixty percent of all children in detention facilities have a diagnosable mental health condition largely left untreated. Twenty percent of those children suffer from serious emotional disturbances and should be treated in the mental health and educational systems, not the juvenile justice system.

The challenge for juvenile justice providers statewide is to support those areas of competency that needed early in a child's contact with the juvenile justice system, so that he or she will have a high likelihood of success. Towards that end, early efforts in Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiatives (JDAI) have been taken up statewide and are aimed at keeping a child out of detention and in the community where chances for success are higher. However, development of more community-based resources is critical to JDAI's success.

Deprivation of mental health treatment and basic human rights at the Nevada Youth Training Center in Elko were the subject of a 2002 investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice. As a result of the investigation, it was determined that juvenile mental health issues were sorely underserved. Consequently, additional resources have been approved for all youth training camps in Nevada. The sufficiency and appropriateness of such services has not yet been determined.

Blended sentencing has been offered as a consequential solution for minors who have committed serious crimes in Nevada. There is a belief, unsupported by actual research, that Nevada's Juvenile Courts' jurisdiction and Adult Certification procedures are insufficient to create appropriate sentencing dispositions for some minors.

Blended sentencing is the process by which jurisdictions of the Juvenile Court and the Adult Court overlap, allowing the child to be penalized in the adult system. Nevada currently allows the Juvenile Court to maintain jurisdiction over children until they are 21, which is a form of blended sentencing. Anticipated legislation could substantially increase the number of children who end up in the adult prison system.

The ultimate consequence of penalizing a minor in the adult system is the death penalty, which may be imposed on certain minors 16 or older. The United States Supreme Court, whose decision is expected sometime this summer, is currently considering the constitutionality of the juvenile death penalty nationwide.

The Mission

The mission of the juvenile justice system is to address juvenile crime and delinquency with a restorative justice approach involving community protection, victim restoration and juvenile competency development.

Current Services

Currently, Nevada's Juvenile Justice System is county-based with children overseen by County Departments of Probation. If delinquency behavior progresses and probation is not terminated, children are placed in the custody of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and are committed to a youth training camp. Nevada has three youth training camps, Caliente, Summit View and Nevada Youth Training Center. Following release from a youth training facility, children are placed on juvenile parole.

Gaps in Services

The following inadequacies in the juvenile justice system must be addressed:

- The absence of community-based, accessible, affordable juvenile mental health treatment and diagnostic services, which incorporate both juveniles and their families.

- The absence of alternative community-based placement options and support services for children otherwise held in detention facilities. Inadequate information sharing across agencies and organizations working with youth and families.
- Uncoordinated oversight of children placed in residential treatment centers and youth training camps.

Nevada Can Do Better

- Designate a panel of representatives from the juvenile justice system and all three branches of government to assess the consequences of blended sentencing in Nevada.
- Implement a comprehensive system of delivery for community-based affordable, accessible juvenile mental health services.
- Implement community-based options for alternative placement for delinquent youth.
- Support creation of an independent oversight body to monitor rights and treatment of juveniles placed in public and private residential institutions.
- Abolish the juvenile death penalty.

Pay Equity

The Problem

Laws mandating equal treatment have been on the books for 40 years. However, despite Title VII and the 1963 Equal Pay Act, the wage gap between men and women has narrowed by only a third in the last 20 years (U.S. Department of Labor, *About Equal Pay*, p. 15).

According to the data from the 2002 Current Population Survey on the median annual earnings of full-time workers, Nevada women earn 77% of men's earnings, on average. Nationwide, the figure is 76% (Institute for Women's Policy Research). Even after accounting for differences in skills, experience, industry, occupation and union status, women still lose 11 cents compared to every dollar earned by men (*About Equal Pay*).

It is important for the economic survival of working families that women and people of color earn fair wages. "If working women earned the same as men (those who work the same number of hours, have the same education, age, and union status, and live in the same region of the country), their annual family incomes would rise by \$4000 and poverty rates would be cut in half" (Judith Appelbaum, National Women's Law Center).

The majority of women in Nevada are still likely to work in such traditional, female-dominated jobs as cashier, waitress, teacher or administrative assistant. These positions pay much less than male-dominated jobs, yet the overall level of knowledge and skill needed is often comparable. Women who have made it into higher-paying managerial and professional jobs fare better, but still do not earn the same pay as their male counterparts. A Nevada Department of Personnel study showed that women in state government hold 34% of the higher paying state administrative jobs, while they make up about 91% of the lower-paying administrative support and clerical positions. In Nevada as a whole women fare slightly better, holding 39% of all higher paying administrative positions (*Las Vegas Review Journal*, July 21, 2000).

The wage gap is further compounded when dissimilar occupations have equal educational and experience requirements. "When school custodians, in plentiful supply, make more money than school secretaries, where there are shortages, we know that bias, not legitimate market factors, are at work" (U.S. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton).

Current Situation

Most women work because of economic necessity. One in five families is headed by a single mother and another three in five families have two working parents. Despite women's greater responsibility for family income, their earnings are still low. Census 2000 figures show that in Nevada median annual earnings for women amounted to \$27,500 in 1999, compared to \$35,800 for men.

There are significant differences by race and ethnicity: in Nevada white women earn a median annual income of \$32,000 in 2003 dollars; African American and Asian American women \$27,600; Native American women \$27,400; and Hispanic women only \$22,100 (Institute for Women's Policy Research). The earnings gap is even more striking when women's earnings are compared to the earnings of white men in Nevada: white women earned 73% of white men's earnings; African American and Asian American women 63%; Native American women 62%; and Hispanic women earned exactly half of white men's earnings, 50%.

During the 2003 Nevada legislative session Sprint and AAA Nevada were recognized for their fair pay policies. There are many more employers in both the public and private sectors that deserve recognition for conducting compensation studies and instituting fair pay policies.

Gaps in Services

The wage gap affects not only women, but children and the social services of Nevada. A woman earns, on average, \$500,000 less than her male counterpart over her lifetime. This disparity

affects women's lifestyles, housing, pensions, and their children's educational opportunities. It places an additional burden on Nevada's services.

Although many employers in the private sector have led the way by instituting fair pay policies for their employees, the state of Nevada has a history of neglecting this problem. This results in a high rate of turnover in certain employee classifications, and increased recruitment and training costs. In states where compensation studies have been done, pay adjustments have been phased in over a period of years.

Susan's Story

Susan is a single mother of two small children. She has her high school diploma and one year of library work in another state. Susan has just moved to Nevada and would like to work for the state. She does not meet the minimum requirements for a Library Assistant III position, typically a female occupation. The pay grade for this position is 25, with an approximate salary range of \$27,000 to \$37,000. She could qualify if she had one more year of work experience or if she had graduated from a four-year accredited college or university in addition to her one year of library work. Since she does not qualify in either category, Susan would have to demonstrate that she possesses entry level knowledge, skills and the ability to perform the duties of this position.

Susan looks at other pay grade 25 entry level positions with the State of Nevada. She finds that the Maintenance Repair Worker II position, a typically male occupation, has the same salary range. This position's minimum requirements do not include any education if the applicant has at least one year of experience.

Nevada Can Do Better

- Conduct a wage disparity study of the state employee classification system, considering such factors such as skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions as well as salaries paid to employees of local governments and private businesses.
- Recommend action to eliminate any disparities identified in the study, including a plan to phase in any pay adjustments over a reasonable period of time.
- Declare April 19, 2005, Equal Pay Day in Nevada (women must work through April 19, 2005, on average, from January 1, 2004, to earn what men earned by December 31, 2004).
- Continue recognition of public and private sector employers who have implemented fair pay policies.

Reproductive Freedom

The Problem

For the past thirty years, since the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Roe vs. Wade*, anti-choice hardliners have whittled away at reproductive freedom. *Roe* guaranteed a right to privacy which ensured American women had control of their reproductive lives – to determine whether, when and how often to bear children. Pro-choice advocates support the full range of choices about reproduction: sexuality education; pregnancy prevention; parenting; adoption; or abortion. In the last eight years Congress has passed more than 250 anti-choice bills, in spite of the fact that 90% of Americans support family planning and 73% are pro-choice and firmly believe reproductive freedom is a deeply personal decision which resides with a woman and her doctor (Lake Snell Perry Poll).

Current Status

Reproductive freedom has limited success in Nevada. The right to abortion is protected by law as affirmed in the 1990 public referendum known as Question 7 and can only be changed by a vote of the people. The law allows abortion during the first 24 weeks of pregnancy and after 24 weeks if the life or health of the woman is at risk. Counseling and informed consent prior to abortion are mandated in the law. A physician is required to verify that consent is informed and given freely.

Access to family planning, including abortion services, is problematic in Nevada. It is affected by the costs for large numbers of uninsured or under-insured women, the distances patients in Nevada rural communities must travel and the shortage of medical providers (obstetricians, gynecologists and abortion providers).

Nevada is one of sixteen states to pass contraceptive equity legislation, which ensures that non-religiously affiliated insurance providers must provide contraceptive coverage if other prescriptions are provided in the plan. Yet that only covers one-third of Nevada women. The

other two-thirds are either in private plans unaffected by legislation, insured by religiously affiliated plans or uninsured. Federal Medicaid funding for abortion is prohibited except in cases of rape or incest or when the woman's life is endangered.

The federal government allows states to define the fetus as a child in order to provide prenatal health care under the State Child Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP). This is regarded by many pro-choice organizations as a first step in making all abortions illegal.

Gaps in Services

No legal restrictions impede women's access to safe and legal abortion, but gaps exist in access to family planning (see Reproductive Health Care) and abortion services. Nevada prohibits public funding of abortion unless to save the life of the woman or if the woman is a rape survivor, creating an unnecessary burden for those most in need. Nevada has an unconstitutional provision which dictates a limit on abortion provision after the 24th week – a state may not declare viability occurs at a particular gestational age because viability occurs at different points with each pregnancy (NARAL, 2004).

Across the nation only 16% of counties have an abortion provider; in Nevada only two of seventeen counties (or 11%) have abortion providers. Only 15% of medical schools (including the University Of Nevada School Of Medicine) provide training in abortion procedures, creating a shortage of trained physicians. Nevada prohibits nurse practitioners from providing non-surgical abortion options even though prescriptions fit within their scope of practice.

Pharmacists are not currently required to dispense all legal prescriptions in Nevada. Pharmacists may refuse to dispense contraception if to do so would conflict with their beliefs.

Marcella's Story

Late one evening, Marcella walked from the bus stop, eager to get home to her husband and children. She never saw her assailant coming. When she didn't arrive on time, her husband went looking for her. He found her, badly bruised, in the bushes. The ambulance took her to the closest hospital, a religious-based institution.

During the exam, Marcella's husband asked the doctor about a prescription for emergency contraception for his wife. Neither Marcella nor Alonso wanted to deal with the consequences of an unwanted pregnancy from the tragedy. He was astonished to learn that the hospital refused to help them prevent a tragic pregnancy.

The next day he called his own health care provider who informed them there was a window of only 72 hours to prevent an unintended pregnancy and they had just 28 hours left. His provider recommended he verify whether their pharmacy would fill the prescription, because not every pharmacist is willing to fill emergency contraception prescriptions because of misinformation that the birth control is an abortifacient.

Nevada Can Do Better

- Provide funding for low-income women to access family planning services, including contraception, pregnancy termination and adoption services.
- Require that the full range of reproductive health care, including prenatal care and pregnancy termination, is available from medical providers throughout Nevada and is covered by standard health insurance benefit packages.
- Require pharmacies (if not every pharmacist) to dispense prescriptions including emergency contraception.
- Assure emergency contraception is available in every emergency room rape kit.
- Allow nurse practitioners to include dispensation of non-surgical abortifacients.
- Refuse to redefine the fetus as a child under SCHIP.
- Reject any restriction on access to abortion, including bans on abortion procedures.
- Support policies that enable women and families to make decisions based on their own needs and the advice of their medical providers, without interference from government, religious organizations or pharmacists.

Submitted by Planned Parenthoods Mar Monte and Southern Nevada, Nevada Physicians for Choice, and the American Association of University Women, Nevada (AAUW).