



# North Carolina NOW

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Dear North Carolina Legislator,

On behalf of the North Carolina chapter of the National Organization for Women (NC NOW), I thank you for your service to our state in the General Assembly. As the grassroots arm of the women's movement, NOW will defend women's rights wherever they are under attack. Below is a summary of current attempts to restrict North Carolina women's autonomy and how you can help women.

NOW supports full access to safe and legal abortion, to effective birth control and emergency contraception, and to reproductive health services and education for all women. NOW affirms that Reproductive Rights are essential to a woman being able to control her own life and that reproductive health decisions should be made by a woman in consultation with her family, her faith and her doctor — not by politicians.

Bills that target women's abortion and reproductive health access this session are

- HB62, Woman's Right to Know Addition/Ashley's Law: **Would require doctors to give women false and misleading information** about non-surgical abortions (the abortion pill); namely, that the procedure can be reversed halfway through. Also requires that fetal death be verified before completing the procedure, which is burdensome.
- HB163, Enact Right to Life at Conception Act: Legalizes certain religious beliefs, which is unconstitutional. This law would have the effect of outlawing abortion and **could turn common forms of birth control into the legal equivalent of a homicide**. In addition, this law sets up doctors to be prosecuted for performing abortions and does not prevent women from being prosecuted.

Please work and vote against them. NC women and doctors are still reeling from past hostile legislation, including from 2015 bill HB465 Women and Children's Protection Act of 2015, which introduced a 20 week abortion ban, as well as a 72 hour waiting period, which imposes unfair burden for many rural women who have to take off work or get childcare to travel to these clinics. It also added 16 week ultrasound requirements, which forces doctors to share women's personal medical information and initiated tracking of their doctors.

North Carolina is also hostile to women by excluding beneficial legislation from consideration.

**Refusing to expand Medicaid is hostile to women.** Expanding Medicaid would offer access to life-saving health insurance for almost 500,000 of NC's working poor. Yet, efforts to block expanding Medicaid are now in their sixth year. According to the National Women's Law Center, "Low-income uninsured women—many of whom would be eligible for health insurance if North Carolina accepted the federal money to expand Medicaid coverage—are more likely to go without care because of cost, less likely to have a regular source of care, and utilize preventive services at lower rates than low-income women with health insurance. In short, this population is in dire need of affordable health care."

**HB2, Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, has been a disaster for North Carolina.** The law goes way beyond bathrooms and targeting a group of citizens. The state was already suffering the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars in economic investments in our state and potentially *billions* in federal support to the state's K-12 schools, colleges and universities. It removes core worker anti-discrimination protections that state law has provided to workers since the 1970s. It targets women, whether intentional or not.

Five bills aimed at repealing HB2 have been introduced to the Legislature in 2017. NC NOW endorses **HB 82 (=SB84), "Equality for All/Repeal HB2."** NC lost out on 14.5 million dollars just in Greensboro just in one weekend in March 2017. This is a manufactured disaster that can be easily remedied.

The United States stands poised to make women's rights history this month as Nevada is expected to ratify the **Equal Rights Amendment** (ERA) after more than three decades. After Nevada, only two more states are needed to ratify this Constitutional amendment. Two ERA bills were introduced in North Carolina on February 14, 2017 - **S85/H102**. NC NOW members and other women's groups demand timely hearings and approval – this is the year for North Carolina to stand on the right side of history.

Women make up more than 2/3 of minimum wage workers in our state. Earning minimum wage at a full-time job is living in poverty, which is completely unacceptable for a state that claims to love and promote the welfare of its children. **HB238, Economic Security Act of 2017**, would raise the state minimum wage to \$15/hr in phases over five years; mandate equal pay for equal work; require paid sick leave and family medical leave and help women and families in other ways. **HB210, Living Wage By 2022**, is another bill to raise the minimum wage, which would assist more than 120,000 NC citizens surviving on the current minimum wage.

NC NOW opposes any legislation that will undermine women's reproductive rights. It is disrespectful to women to insinuate that we cannot make informed decisions about our healthcare. Included in this packet is a copy of our 2017 Pro-choice Signature Ad showing statewide support for reproductive choice. Our officers, our members and our lobbyist will continue to oppose inappropriate government intervention into the lives and health of women in North Carolina.

Please feel free to contact NC NOW at (919) 539-7702 for additional information on these and other issues.

Sincerely,



Gailya Paliga  
President, North Carolina National Organization for Women