

San Fernando Valley/Northeast Los Angeles Chapter National Organization for Women

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SFV/NELA NOW Annual Election Mtg & Holiday Party

January 16, 2010 – 12 noon

13845 Correnti St Arleta CA 91331

Potluck, featuring water-smoked turkey with regular & vegetarian stuffing; email or call for potluck suggestions

SFV/NELA NOW Annual Election & Awards Event

Elections for officers and the board for 2010 for SFV/NELA NOW and presentation of achievement awards will take place January 16, 2010. If you would like to become active in the chapter, become a member of the board (more like a draft than an election), please contact us ahead of time or just show up and volunteer.

Help Restore Same-Sex Marriage Rights

Enclosed with this newsletter is an initiative petition to put repeal of Proposition 8 on the California ballot for 2010. Feel free to make copies and get as many signatures of registered voters as possible. If you need voter registration forms, contact us.

Get Ready to Fight “Parental Notification” – Again....

Becky Bell died September 16, 1988 because Indiana passed a parental consent law for a minor to obtain an abortion, much like one that is currently being circulated to qualify for the California ballot. When California voters found out what is at stake in these laws, they repeatedly rejected similar ballot measures in the past.

Supporters of reproductive choice need to be familiar with the arguments against this initiative to ensure that it doesn't slip through the cracks:

--The proposed constitutional amendment creates an exception to our state

rights of privacy, happiness, and safety in the California constitution; --if a teenager manages to get her case before a judge to bypass parental consent (such as where her father raped her), she must make her case by “clear and convincing” evidence, not just a preponderance of evidence standard; --In a situation where parents would grant consent for an abortion to their daughter, the case of Becky Bell demonstrates that girls *will die from an illegal abortion* rather than use legal mechanisms or tell their parents.

Jeff Belmont Goes to Bat Against "PAS"

SFV/NELA NOW's own Jeff Belmont has emerged as a recognized leader against the use of so-called "Parental Alienation Syndrome" in family law court, a pseudo-scientific scam used by "father's rights" advocates to get custody of children for abusive spouses. Jeff played an instrumental role in securing the passage of legislation amending the California Evidence Code to ban the use of PAS testimony in the courts, especially since the so-called syndrome is not recognized by legitimate psychological and psychiatric associations. Jeff also personally confronted actor Alec Baldwin—the father rights poster boy advocate of PAS—to make clear to him that feminists will not tolerate his attempts to gain legitimacy for this legal fraud.

Federal Hate Crime Law now a Reality

The *Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act* was signed into law by President Obama on October 28, 2009. The law now gives the Department of Justice

the power to investigate and prosecute bias-motivated violence by providing DOJ jurisdiction over crimes of violence where a perpetrator has selected a victim because of the person's actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. This legislation was critical to establishing a national standard protecting transgender people and others that states and local governments have been reluctant to protect.

Harvey Milk Day Recognized

At the state level, California enacted recognition of Harvey Milk's birthday following the popularity of Sean Penn's portrayal of the gay civil rights hero in the movie "Milk."

Civil "Gideon" Law Passed

California has also enacted legislation authored by SFV/NELA NOW

member and State Assembly member Mike Feuer to provide funding for court appointed lawyers in civil and family law matters. This historic legislation will help to correct the imbalance in family law matters where women routinely sacrifice property rights and child custody because of their inability to afford an attorney.

National NOW: Stop the Stupak Amendment

NOW urges its members and supporters to contact their Senators and Representatives to oppose the anti-abortion language in the House and Senate passed health care bills.

According to NOW's analysis, the bills allow any state to prohibit abortion coverage in health insurance exchanges. All funds that pay for abortion services would be segregated from other private funds and federal subsidies. This requirement would apply to the tens of millions of women who would buy their insurance under the new exchanges and, in the opinion of expert health policy analysts, would mean that insurers simply would not provide abortion coverage in the exchange plans. Eventually, insurers would stop offering abortion coverage altogether.