



2009 National NOW Conference Resolutions

passed June 21, 2009

- [Single-Payer Health Care is an Economic Justice Issue](#)
- [Health Care for Women with Disabilities](#)
- [Stop Domestic Terrorism at Women's Health Clinics](#)
- [Anti-Shackling](#)
- [Violence Against Women Act 2010](#)
- [Revision of Accessible NOW Conferences, Forums, Summits, and National Board Meetings Policy](#)
- [National Campaign and National Day of Action to Ratify CEDAW](#)
- [Promoting the Use of Virtual Organizing Tools Within NOW Chapters and the National Office](#)
- [Call to Criminalize Sexual Exploitation of Women by Clergy](#)
- [Use of NOW Funds](#)
- [Equal Rights Amendment](#)

SINGLE-PAYER HEALTH CARE IS AN ECONOMIC JUSTICE ISSUE

WHEREAS, the lack of single-payer health care in the United States is a critically important issue of economic justice for women and their families that affects many economic issues in their lives, and women pay more for health insurance while making less money than men; and

WHEREAS, the lack of single-payer health care leads to unemployment and underemployment because employers do not want to pay health insurance benefits and thus either do not hire workers or hire a high percentage of temporary or part-time workers to avoid paying benefits; and

WHEREAS, many people are tied to jobs in order to keep their health insurance; and

WHEREAS, the largest percentage of people who file bankruptcy do so because of a health care crisis;

WHEREAS, various states have been actively working on passage of single-payer legislation as a vehicle for passage of single-payer on the national level;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Organization for Women (NOW) chapters be encouraged to participate in the July 30, 2009, National Day of Action, arranged and promoted by the coalition of single-payer health care organizations, to advocate for

comprehensive, single-payer health care, as well as continuing their calls to Congress until single-payer health care is passed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW's talking points on the need for single-payer health care include information on how the lack of a single-payer system affects employment and everyone's general economic status and that this is an issue of economic justice, as well as health care access; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW will advocate for passage of state single-payer legislation as another means of the passage of single-payer on the national level;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW's media campaign for single-payer health care include information on economic justice.

HEALTH CARE FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, in 1993, the National Organization for Women (NOW) passed the Single-Payer Health Care resolution, but the resolution did not mention problems that women with disabilities have obtaining health care; and

WHEREAS, people with disabilities are in particular need of single-payer, universal health care, which will place their health needs above the profit motive of insurance companies, which often deny insurance based on pre-existing conditions or drop them from insurance because of their conditions; and

WHEREAS, applying for Social Security disability is a particularly onerous process, which may take years, is regularly denied, and can be disastrous for women who have no other means of support; and

WHEREAS, people with disabilities have particular health care needs that are often incredibly expensive, and their health or lives may be endangered due to lack of health care; and

WHEREAS, women with disabilities often cannot access health care either due to lack of accessible medical facilities or lack of sensitivity toward medical or reproductive issues of women with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive health care is needed to level the playing field and make health care accessible and affordable for all women, including women with disabilities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NOW include women with disabilities in the advocacy for single-payer health care or health care reform with a public option; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW include women with disabilities in their single-payer health care or public option talking points; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW push for a reasonable time to appear before a Social Security judge; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW encourage chapters and at-large members to include women with disabilities in their advocacy for single-payer health care or health care reform with a public option.

STOP DOMESTIC TERRORISM AT WOMEN'S HEALTH CLINICS

WHEREAS, one of the priority issues of the National Organization for Women (NOW) affirms that reproductive freedom is a human right. This includes the right to obtain reproductive education; to have, or not to have children; to have the conditions that enable women to make optimal choices for their own lives; and the right to access reproductive health services, including access to safe and legal abortion, effective birth control, and emergency contraception; and

WHEREAS, the domestic terror campaign against women's reproductive rights is a great ongoing threat to women's reproductive health, safety and liberty; and

WHEREAS, the domestic terror campaign continues to threaten the lives of providers of women's reproductive health services. This includes, but is not limited to, the brutal murder of Dr. George Tiller as well as threats toward Dr. Carhart's Nebraska clinic; and

WHEREAS, such misinformation about third-term abortions coupled with violent use of rhetoric against providers of women's reproductive health service creates a violent climate of emotional and physical terrorism;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NOW conference reaffirm that a woman's right to choose abortion for any reason is a fundamental right that cannot legitimately be abridged by any court or other governmental entity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW implement a "Remember Dr. Tiller" campaign to stand up for the courageous abortion providers who ensure women's health care and demand the government root out this terrorism on our soil; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW continue to demand that state, local and federal governments prosecute to the fullest extent of the law all those who carry out violent attacks against abortion clinics workers and women seeking abortions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National NOW office launch a web and email campaign to expose media bias and propaganda that vilifies abortion providers and women who have abortions and that gives publicity to extremist groups that terrorize clinics and health care workers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a campaign advocate for state legislation to require medical schools to teach abortion procedures as part of their regular training; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW make clinic defense training available to chapter leaders and activists who defend women and health care professionals, including updating and publishing the NOW Clinic Defense manual; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all NOW members are urged to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with women and providers, as our Kansas NOW members did for Dr. Tiller, and hold SpeakOuts about third-term abortions and why women need them; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that all NOW members be encouraged to participate in a massive Day of Thanks for abortion providers annually.

ANTI-SHACKLING

WHEREAS, the shackling of detained and incarcerated pregnant women in pre- and post-childbirth transport to and from detention or correctional facilities and during childbirth should be discontinued; and

WHEREAS, during the birthing process, shackles hamper a woman's ability to move to alleviate the pain and discomfort of her contractions, which increases stress on the woman's body and may decrease the flow of oxygen to the fetus; and

WHEREAS, unrestricted movement is critical during labor, birthing, and the post-birth recovery period; and

WHEREAS, all pregnant women in detention or correctional facilities are dehumanized by this practice, women of color are particularly impacted, as black women are incarcerated at a rate 2.66 times that of white women; and

WHEREAS, the National Organization for Women (NOW) is and always has been interested in the rights of women and issues concerning the most vulnerable women in this country;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NOW support state legislation to force detention centers, correctional facilities, and hospitals to discontinue shackling pregnant women who are detained or incarcerated during labor and during pre- and post-childbirth transport from detention to medical facilities; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW advocate for legislation to eliminate these dehumanizing and oppressive treatments and policies that impact women who are pregnant, birthing and immediately post-birth.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT 2010

WHEREAS, the time is here for anti-violence advocates, all feminists, and especially the National Organization for Women (NOW) members to mount a campaign to:

Raise public awareness about violence against women across this country and around the world;

- Bring together partners from every sector to mount prevention efforts;
- Ensure that Congress provide public funds to fully support victim services and programs for survivors, as well as services and programs for prevention, reduction and intervention;
- Reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act in 2010; and
- Improve local, campus, business, state, and national policies that work toward the goal of ending violence through public outcry, prevention strategies, and community supports;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NOW join the Campaign to End Sexual and Domestic Violence currently being organized by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Legal Momentum, and others; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW promote this campaign through the National NOW Times and NOW's website; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW provide to its state and local leaders the assistance they will need to work on this issue of vital importance to all feminists, including kits, fact sheets, timely alerts, and information.

REVISION OF ACCESSIBLE NOW CONFERENCES, FORUMS, SUMMITS, AND NATIONAL BOARD MEETINGS POLICY

WHEREAS, in 1978, the National Organization for Women (NOW) passed its original Disability Rights resolution “urging chapters to provide barrier-free facilities, assistance for the blind, and interpreters for the deaf”; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, NOW passed a resolution calling for Accessible NOW Conferences, Forums, Summits, and National Board Meetings that mandated use of an accessibility checklist at the meetings listed therein but that was unclear whether states and local chapters should use this checklist and associated procedures; and

WHEREAS, this accessibility checklist does not cover access for women of size;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the accessibility checklist be reviewed and amended to include issues of accessibility for women of size; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all state, regional, and national meetings, conferences, forums, and summits use and follow this checklist and procedures as described in the 2002 resolution; and

<p.**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that local chapters be strongly encouraged to use this checklist in selecting their meeting and event sites.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN AND NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION TO RATIFY CEDAW

WHEREAS, as of April 26, 2009, 186 countries have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the international treaty calling for basic human rights for women; and

WHEREAS, Qatar ratified CEDAW in April 2009 without any reservations to the treaty, leaving only seven nations (including the United States, Iran, Sudan and Somalia) that have failed to ratify it; and

WHEREAS, nations that ratify this treaty commit themselves to take concrete action to improve the status of women and end discrimination against them; and

WHEREAS, CEDAW was favorably voted out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee twice-once in 1994 and once in 2002-with 96 cities, counties, and states in the U.S. passing resolutions calling on the Senate to ratify CEDAW; and

WHEREAS, the NOW Global Feminist Issues and Strategies Ad Hoc Committee has identified CEDAW as long overdue for ratification by the U.S. Senate; and

WHEREAS, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey (D-CA) introduced a resolution in January 2009 with 121 co-sponsors, urging immediate Senate action on the treaty; and

WHEREAS, Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA), chair of the Foreign Relations subcommittee overseeing global women's issues, has announced that she will lead an effort seeking ratification of CEDAW; and

WHEREAS, Vice President Biden and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have long been advocates for ratifying CEDAW, and President Obama supports ratification of CEDAW;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NOW vigorously advocate for ratification of CEDAW without the addition of harmful reservations, understandings and declarations (RUDs); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW call on the Justice Department to reject the RUDs previously under consideration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW launch a national campaign with chapters and activists throughout the country taking action to urge their U.S. Senators to ratify a “clean” version of CEDAW and urge the Obama Administration to play a leadership role in getting the Senate to do so; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this campaign include use of newer forms of technology to expand the reach of our message through the media and the blogosphere; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW declare March 8, 2010, a national day of action and work with the Global Feminist Issues and Strategies Ad Hoc Committee to organize rallies in various cities across the country to put pressure on the U.S. Senate to ratify CEDAW, and activists will be called on to lobby their U.S. Senators urging them to push for immediate ratification of CEDAW.

PROMOTING THE USE OF VIRTUAL ORGANIZING TOOLS WITHIN NOW CHAPTERS AND THE NATIONAL OFFICE

WHEREAS, the process of grassroots organizing and activism is constantly evolving as new technologies become available; and

WHEREAS, virtual technologies are essential tools for connecting activists and allowing them to coordinate production of effective action campaigns; and

WHEREAS, many National Organization of Women (NOW) entities are not taking full advantage of virtual technologies like content-management website software, message boards, wikis, blogs, chat rooms, webinars, web conferences, podcasts of both audio and video material, Google or Yahoo Groups, Google Docs, Constant Contact, Twitter, and social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Linked-In, and others; and

WHEREAS, these and other communications technologies, when combined with traditional activist methods, can be invaluable tools to help chapters reach political figures, conventional and new media sources, potential new members, existing members, and other community leaders and organizers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the national officers of NOW make the teaching of virtual technologies a priority for all state and chapter leaders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NOW President appoint a national “Technology Empowerment Team” consisting of activists with expertise in these kinds of virtual technology tools. This Tech team will be responsible for producing a report that will be available on the website and sent to all chapters detailing the kinds of virtual tools available to assist activists with their organizing work; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the National NOW Action Center provide simple, user-friendly instructions for the use of such tools, along with recommendations for which company's tools to use if there are options; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the National NOW Action Center, including the officers, model the effective use of these virtual organizing tools for chapters and be ready to assist chapters with implementing and using them if needed.

CALL TO CRIMINALIZE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN BY CLERGY

WHEREAS, the National Organization for Women (NOW) has fought hard to shatter societal silence regarding all forms of sexual violence; and

<p>**WHEREAS**, public misunderstanding and lack of knowledge regarding adult victims of sexual exploitation by clergy have contributed to silencing the voices of these victims; and

WHEREAS, the overwhelming majority of victims of sexual exploitation by clergy are adults, predominately female congregants victimized by male clergy; and

WHEREAS, adult victims of clergy sexual exploitation are routinely blamed for this abuse and revictimized by the public, severely ostracized by their own congregations, and disbelieved by religious authority figures from whom they seek solace and protection, resulting in devastating social isolation and confusion; and

WHEREAS, in addition to coping with the physical and emotional impacts of sexual violation, victims of sexual exploitation by clergy often also suffer loss of faith, loss of religious tradition, loss of spouse, loss of employment within religious organizations or with faith-affiliated educational institutions, self-blame by the victim, and loss of support from family, congregation, and community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NOW chapters be encouraged to participate in educational and advocacy campaigns to increase public awareness that the majority of victims of clergy sexual exploitation are adult women and that sexual violation by a spiritual leader has profound life-altering impacts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW entities be encouraged to support state legislative campaigns for statutory reform, in particular to add clergy to the enumerated categories of professionals covered in fiduciary-duty laws in states having such laws, and for criminalization of sexual relations between similarly enumerated categories of professionals in states not having fiduciary-duty laws; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW disseminate information on the extent and impacts of clergy sexual exploitation of adult women, including legal avenues of redress and model

legislation, on the NOW website and via other media outlets that NOW regularly utilizes for its advocacy campaigns.

USE OF NOW FUNDS

WHEREAS, donors and members of the National Organization for Women (NOW) give to NOW to support the multi-issue, unique, and uncompromising approach to women's rights that has made NOW the largest and strongest women's rights organization, and these donors believe their dollars are being given to support NOW; and

WHEREAS, NOW has made a long-time commitment to share renewal dues with chapters and states, and many chapters and states depend upon these rebates for their operating expenses; and

WHEREAS, most chapter and state bylaws state that when deconvening a chapter, any remaining treasury should be given to another entity of NOW; and

WHEREAS, the National NOW Action Center and state organizations have received reports from chapters that they have given large donations to other non-profit organizations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that a deconvening chapter must give any chapter funds to another entity of NOW; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW encourage any chapter that wishes to make a donation to make that donation to National NOW or to a state or local NOW chapter.

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

WHEREAS, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) ensures that women will have equal rights under the Constitution, and the National Organization for Women (NOW) supports the advancement of women's rights; and

WHEREAS, the 2008 election resulted in the historic victory of a president who represents the advancement of all Americans; and

WHEREAS, the only permanent right women explicitly have in the Constitution is the right to vote, and rights not supported by the Constitution can be undermined in legislatures and courts, where women are underrepresented; and

WHEREAS, women still have far to go to achieve equality under the law and have not achieved equal pay for equal work, which would be guaranteed by the ERA; and

WHEREAS, the ERA, introduced in 1972, needs only three more states for passage, and strong ERA advocacy organizations have arisen in the 15 states yet to ratify; and

WHEREAS, legal opinions support the conclusion that “the Constitution imposes no time limit for ratification of amendments,” and passage of the Madison Amendment 203 years after it was first proposed supports the determination that Congress can choose any time frame for deciding amendments; and

WHEREAS, a strong campaign to pass the ERA by either strategy can reinvigorate NOW and its state chapters, positively impacting other efforts for women’s rights;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that NOW take advantage of this moment in history to support strategies to ratify the ERA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NOW mobilize all of its chapters and provide nonmonetary resources to support these efforts, such as inclusion in newsletters, press releases, chapter education projects, and the like; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that NOW pursue grassroots and legislative strategies in support of both the three-state and the 38-state strategies.