



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry

A voice for justice, equality and compassion in New Jersey

Speaking out on Reproductive Justice

Policy Position Statement in Support of Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH) Act

Policy: The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of New Jersey (UULMNJ), representing the Unitarian Universalist congregations in New Jersey, supports reproductive justice for all women. Reproductive justice, a concept put forth by coalitions of women of color, promotes the right of all women to have children, to not have children, and to raise their children in safe and healthy environments.

The foundation for the UULMNJ's support for reproductive justice is rooted in the Unitarian Universalist principle that affirms and promotes the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We value life and the consciences of individuals, and we are called to protect and affirm the lives of women when it comes to their reproductive lives. The support for Reproductive Justice was affirmed by the Unitarian Universalist (UUA) General Assembly on June 26, 2015 in the Statement of Conscience on Reproductive Justice.

Position: The Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance Act (EACH), HR 2972, makes a policy change for women and their families by setting up the federal government as a standard-bearer, ensuring that every woman receives care or insurance that will cover all reproductive health services, including abortion. This includes Medicaid recipients, Peace Corp volunteers, federal employees, women in the military and Native American women. It also prohibits political interference with decisions by private health insurers to offer abortion care coverage. Since the Hyde Amendment was passed in 1976 the lack of the full range of reproductive health services for women has been a major impediment to access to safe abortion care. In New Jersey, Medicaid pays for abortion care; however, no federal funds can be used.

UULMNJ, along with many interfaith clergy and groups, has signed a letter written by the National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section. The letter, sent to U.S. Senators and Representatives representing NJ, urges that they support the EACH Act. The letter focuses on equal access for every woman. As people of faith, they point out that they support the EACH Woman Act as a measure critical to advancing compassion, justice and liberty in America. The letter further states that:

We...are called to treat all individuals with dignity, no matter their income, insurance, gender, race or other factors. Currently, bans that deny abortion coverage fall hardest on individuals struggling to make ends meet, women of color, immigrant women, and young people... Low-income women should have the same basic care afforded to wealthy and middle-class women...

As people of faith, we believe in religious freedom. Our nation is home to people of many different faiths and people with no religious affiliation. We cannot limit an individual's religious liberty by enshrining one set of beliefs into law; in the context of abortion coverage, doing so restricts an individual's ability to make personal decisions about their pregnancy, health, and family according to their own religious or moral beliefs and conscience. No government committed to human rights and democracy can privilege one religion over another.

UULMNJ proudly signed this letter and urges all religious people who share similar values to sign. Further information can be obtained by contacting Mandi Perlmutter, Director of Advocacy and Community Engagement, National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Section at (973) 740-0588.

For Further Information, Please Contact:

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