



# 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 Long-Acting Reversible Contraception**

**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 Association (UUA) General Assembly on June 26, 2015 in the Statement of Conscience on Reproductive Justice.

**Position:** Sister Song and the National Women's Health Network have recently identified issues related to the increased funding of, attention, and focus on Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives (LARCs). While these methods are a part of a "well balanced mix of options that also includes barrier methods, oral contraceptives, and more, the fact is that there is some concern about questionable practices when it comes to who is targeted for LARCs and the way in which counselling is provided." After reviewing the Statement of Principles and confirming that they are in concert with UU values and the UUA Statement of Conscience, the Reproductive Justice Task Force has asked UULMNJ to join as one of the sponsors. The principles are below:

*We acknowledge the complex history of the provision of LARCs and seek to ensure that counselling is provided in a consistent and respectful manner that neither denies access nor coerces anyone into using a specific method.*

*We commit to ensuring that people are provided comprehensive, scientifically accurate information about the full range of contraceptive options in a medically ethical and culturally competent manner in order to ensure that each person is supported in identifying the method that best meets their needs.*

*Advocates and the medical community must balance efforts to emphasize contraception as part of a healthy sex life beyond the fear of unintended pregnancy with appropriate counselling and support for people who seek contraception for other health reasons.*

*The decision to obtain a LARC should be made by each person on the basis of quality counselling that helps them identify what will work best for them. No one should be pressured into using a*

*certain method or denied access based on limitations in health insurance for the insertion or removal of LARC devices.*

*The decision to cease using a long-acting method should be made by each individual with support from their health professional without judgment or obstacles.*

*The current enthusiasm for LARCs should not distract from the ongoing need to support other policies and programs that address the full scope of healthy sexuality.*

The Reproductive Justice Task Force believes that these principles, if applied to the care of oppressed and marginalized women, will give women the necessary tools to control their own fertility.

*For Further Information, Please Contact:*

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