



**UU Faithaction Reproductive Justice Task Force (RJTF)
Annual Report - April 21, 2018**

The Reproductive Justice Task Force had a busy and productive six months. The task force has followed closely the progress of our Signature Legislation at the same time that we have followed new initiatives.

Special concern is the reproductive justice issues that are intersectional and impact especially on the Legal Advocacy Signature Legislation.

The Legal Advocacy Signature Legislation, the first initiated by UU FaithAction is the Address Confidentiality Program for Reproductive Health Service Employees and Clients. It will “initiate legislation to add abortion providers and their support staff to those eligible for protection under New Jersey’s Address Confidentiality Program “(ACP)”. Sen. Loretta Weinberg is Senate sponsor (S1761). The bill was referred to Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee and was heard on March 5. Lessie Culmer -Nier and Tom Moran were at the hearing representing UU FaithAction. Tom testified by reading one of the pieces of written testimony from a clinic worker. Carol Loscalzo had submitted written testimony to the Senate staff from 4 people, 3 working in clinics and one, David S. Cohen, Esq. , the author who wrote “Living in the Crosshairs: the Untold Story of Anti-Abortion Terrorism. ” The bill was voted out of committee and referred to Budget and Appropriations Committee.

A1861- Asw. Pam Lampitt is the Assembly sponsor with Asm. John McKeon and Asw. Nancy Pinkin co sponsoring. It has been referred to Assembly Health and Senior Services Committee.

Initiatives and Issues

The task force joined with the Criminal Justice Task Force to sponsor an event at the Monmouth congregation on 2/ 18/18, “Know Her Truths: Life behind Bars for Women in NJ”. It explored the gendered challenges women face in NJ prisons, including sexual violence, reproductive assaults, and mothering from the inside. The panel featured our own Johanna Foster, PhD, Johanna Christian, PhD and two returning citizens.

Approximately 100 participants attended this early afternoon event. The event involved the cooperation of two task forces and highlighted the intersectionality of the work. We were very grateful for the hospitality of the Monmouth congregation, especially the Racial Justice Committee. The legislative interests the task force is tacking reflect some of the outcomes of the day.

An immediate outcome of the event presented itself when on 2/22 the Senate Law and Public Service Committee held a hearing about sexual assault allegations at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women. The task force was represented at the hearing by two members and Rev. Rob Gregson. So far, there have not been any initiatives as an outcome.

Other Legislation that is Being Tracked by the RJ Task Force

ASSEMBLY BILL 2186 - TO PROHIBIT RESTRAINT OF FEMALE INMATES DURING LABOR AND CHILDBIRTH (Huttle et al.) Under the bill, correctional facility staff or medical providers would not be permitted to apply restraints to a prisoner known to be pregnant during any stage of labor, any pregnancy related medical distress, transport to a medical facility, delivery, or postpartum. Restraints would be allowed if determination is made that the prisoner presents a substantial flight risk; or some other extraordinary medical or security circumstance exists. In cases when restraints are permitted, the bill would require that the least restrictive type and application of restraint necessary would be used.

SENATE BILL 495 ESTABLISHES MATERNAL MORTALITY REVIEW COMMISSION (Vitale, Ruiz) AND ASSEMBLY BILL 1862 (Lampitt, Mukherji, Huttle and Pinkin) This bill would annually review and report on rates and causes of maternal death in New Jersey and recommend improvement to maternal care. This legislation is critical to help determine the causes of rising maternal deaths in NJ and ensure that health care providers are able to identify the most effective strategies for improving maternal care. Referred to

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Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. The Assembly bill has been referred to the Assembly Women and Children Committee and was reported out of committee on March 12, 2018.

ASSEMBLY BILL 314 - RESTRICTS USE OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN STATE PRISONS, JAILS, DETENTION FACILITIES (Pinkin et al) The bill prohibits inmates from being placed in isolated confinement unless there is reasonable cause to believe that the inmate or others would be at substantial risk of immediate, serious harm as evidenced by recent threats or conduct, and any less restrictive intervention would be insufficient to reduce that risk. Defines isolated confinement as “confinement of an inmate in a correctional facility in a cell or similarly confined holding or living space, alone or with other inmates, for approximately 20 hours or more per day with severely restricted activity, movement, and social interaction.” Inmates determined to be “vulnerable” cannot be placed in solitary confinement: 21 years of age or younger; is 65 years of age or older; has a disability based on a mental illness, a history of psychiatric hospitalization, and other identifiers.

SENATE BILL 108 - ESTABLISHES A PROGRAM IN TO FACILITATE THE COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION OF CERTAIN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS FOLLOWING THEIR INCARCERATION FOR CRIMES AGAINST THEIR ABUSERS (Weinberg) AND ASSEMBLY BILL 1022 (Johnson and Mosquera) the program is referred to as supervised community reintegration. Those selected undergo reentry training, and agree to a reintegration plan outlining their responsibilities under the program, which may include a secure residential community placement and participation in a work release program. Participants who fail to fulfill their responsibilities under their reintegration plan or who violate the provisions of the program would be removed from the program. The State Parole Board may release an inmate from incarceration into the community reintegration program pursuant to criteria established in the bill. Senate bill referred to the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee and Assembly bill referred to Assembly Women to and Children Committee.

Coalition /Advocacy Work

Co-sponsored the January 20 Women’s March on NJ in Morristown.

My Health My Life Coalition -The task force chair continued as an active member of the coalition. It advocated strongly for the restoration of family planning funding which was signed by the Governor on February 21.

Sponsored National Council of Jewish Women, Essex County Unit’s Roe event, “Danger Pregnancy Ahead: Examining the growing number of infringements on women’s access to health care and how the women’s overall health is being alarmingly jeopardized”.

The task force chair was invited to join the Crisis Pregnancy Centers (Fake Clinics) task force representing UU FaithAction. A Round Table to determine next steps is planned for the fall.

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