

July 2014

Nebraska Right to Life

State Affiliate to the National Right to Life Committee

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ACTION NEEDED: BEFRIEND YOUR PRO-LIFE STATE SENATOR AND/OR LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES

As we prepare for the 2015 Unicameral Session, it is important to address some issues that have been hampering our ability to pass pro-life legislation in recent years. This is where you, the pro-life constituent, comes in. We need to enlist your help to once again pass meaningful, innovative legislation that protects the sanctity of all human life, from fertilization through natural death.

As you know, the Nebraska Legislature passed pro-life legislation in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. No pro-life bills have passed in the past three years. To what do we attribute that? There are several factors. One is that Senator Ernie Chambers sat out four years for term limits, but he returned in the 2013 session.

As our biggest adversary in the

Legislature, he fights any pro-life legislation that gets to the Judiciary Committee (where he is the longtime de facto Chairman) and then, if anything gets to the floor, he filibusters it. This has a tendency to wear down pro-life state senators and discourage them from introducing anything when they know they need 33 votes through two stages of floor debate to invoke cloture and overcome a Chambers' filibuster.

Secondly, it is difficult to make headway unless we have the Speaker of the Legislature and the Judiciary & Health Committees Chairmen with us. They are key players in their ability to block any legislation from coming to the floor or to assist us. The Unicameral, consisting of 49 senators, elects their own leadership and will do so again in January on the first day of the 2015 session. While Nebraska Right to Life historically does not lobby on new leadership, it is imperative that our returning pro-life senators know that who they elect to those positions is crucial to the success of our legislation.

But lastly, and most importantly, it is our own pro-life senators who often are our biggest hurdle when it comes to passing new laws. Why? Because there are so many competing interests and lobbyists pulling at them from all directions and they now can only serve eight consecutive years thanks to term limits.

Term limits has its drawbacks. While it made Senator Chambers sit out four



Connie Consbruck of South Central Nebraska Right to Life talks to her State Senator, Les Seiler, during the 2012 Pro-Life Legislative Day.

years, it also allowed him to run again after that hiatus. If term limits are really about limiting terms, it didn't work in the case of Senator Chambers.

Term limits means we are losing many incumbent senators whom Nebraska Right to Life PAC had endorsed and who at least had pro-life voting records. We also are losing a few who have introduced legislation in the past. Only four current senators have introduced and/or prioritized pro-life legislation. Four senators in a body with a majority of pro-life senators is not enough. Beyond that, seven pro-life senators who came into office in 2013 have never even had an opportunity to vote on a pro-life bill, so right now we have a scorecard on them that shows

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Constituents visit with former State Senator Gwen Howard during the 2012 Pro-Life Legislative Day.

GRAND ISLAND



NEBRASKA
RIGHT TO LIFE
AROUND THE
STATE

Right to Life volunteers across the State man their annual County Fair booths, an essential outreach that educates thousands of Nebraskans about fetal development, abortion and euthanasia. Nebraska Right to Life Educational Trust Fund assists with a number

of County Fair booths sending out County Fair Care Packages of items and brochures that local groups appreciate receiving. This leads in to our annual booth at the State Fair, this year from Aug. 22nd to Sept. 1st. Please e-mail nebraskartl@gmail.com if you would like to work a shift at the State Fair.

Diane Ruzicka works the Grand Island Right to Life booth at the Hall County Fair in July. She is one of many pro-life volunteers across the State who work to educate the general public about sanctity of life issues.

CONVINCE YOUR SENATOR TO ADVOCATE PRO-LIFE

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them as doing nothing pro-life even though they were endorsed pro-life candidates. Moreover, those seven (six who ran with an endorsement) have not stepped up to be new pro-life leaders.

Every pro-life senator & candidate wants to run with an endorsement from Nebraska Right to Life PAC and many have. Even though we “pitch” model legislation to most pro-life senators, it is difficult to get someone to step up to the plate and introduce or prioritize something. Sometimes we get the message that they are afraid of leading on the issue because it puts a target on their back from our opponents or from Senator Chambers, who is ruthless in attacking others’ priority bills.

This is unacceptable. We network with our counterparts from across the nation at National Right to Life Board meetings and conventions. It is amazing how many other States are able to continually pass pro-life legislation every year. Missouri’s House & Senate introduced 32 — count em’, 32 — pro-life bills in their 2013 session! Texas, Kansas and Oklahoma are States that have lead on pro-life legislation, as Nebraska has in the past, and they manage to consistently pass bills every year. Our compatriots in other States tell us they have pro-life senators and representatives lining up to introduce and lead on legislation.

There is no reason for Nebraska to stop being a leader on pro-life legislation. Remember, it was Nebraska’s partial birth abortion ban that made it to the

U.S. Supreme Court and paved the way for the federal ban, which eventually was upheld as the law of the land. It also was Nebraska’s Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act that forced LeRoy Carhart to take his late-term abortion business out of the State and has spawned the introduction of the same bill in 10 other States and the U.S. Congress.

We need your help in communicating to your pro-life state senator and/or legislative candidate that we need and want leaders in the Unicameral. By leaders we mean people who will introduce and prioritize legislation and who will work diligently to get such legislation out of the Judiciary and Health Committees. Pushing the green button on a floor vote is always needed and appreciated, but we don’t get to that final step without the senators who have a passion for our issue and are willing to put themselves out front on it.

You will be seeing your pro-life senator and/or legislative candidate this Summer and Fall at festivals, county fairs and town halls. Please befriend them and start up an email/mail or phone relationship with them. Every pro-life senator and/or candidate knows that there is a substantial voting block of pro-lifers in their district, and that is why they seek an NRL PAC stamp of approval on their candidacy. You and others need to remind them that you are expecting them to not just run pro-life but to lead pro-life when and if they get to Lincoln.

The NRL PAC survey not only asks

them questions about their positions on potential legislation but also about the Unicameral process, such as whether they would “seriously consider introducing and prioritizing pro-life legislation.” Many of them respond in the affirmative to those questions. We need to hold them to it. Without cultivating new leaders, we will not be able to pass legislation; it’s that simple.

As public servants, state senators work long hours throughout the year for little pay but the old adage is true, “the squeaky wheel gets the grease,” especially when they are trying to juggle the needs of their districts.

To identify your senator’s record or candidate’s position, see the compilation on Page 3. While it is important that you contact your senator even if he or she has a pro-abortion or M voting record, the people who really need the contact are the pro-life ones. They have said publicly they are with us on this issue, now is the time for them to act on it.

Please send an update to us at our contact information in this newsletter once you have had a chance to talk to your senator and/or candidate. Any information you can provide is helpful in our ability to approach and work with those most likely to take to heart our desire to pass more pro-life legislation. Thank you for your help in this important outreach! If you do not know what legislative district you are in, go to http://www.http://nebraskalegislature.gov/senators/senator_find.php and insert your zip code.

WHERE DOES YOUR STATE SENATOR/CANDIDATE STAND?

Key: P-L: Pro-life, N-R: No response, M: Answered mixed

DISTRICT

- 1 **Dan Watermeier:** Incumbent since 2013, endorsed P-L, no voting record or advocacy.
- 2 **Bill Kintner:** Incumbent since 2013, endorsed P-L, introduced & prioritized P-L, P-L voting record and advocacy, running again. *Ron Nolte:* N-R.
- 3 **Tommy Garrett:** Incumbent since 2014, answered P-L, no voting record or advocacy, running again. **Carol Blood:** New candidate, answered P-L.
- 4 **Robert Hilkemann & Stacy Ryan:** New candidates, both answered P-L.
- 5 **Heath Mello:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 6 **Joni Craighead:** New candidate, answered P-L. *John Stahlaker:* N-R.
- 7 **Jeremy Nordquist:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 8 **Burke Harr:** Incumbent since 2011, P-L voting record, no advocacy except was instrumental in getting Stop Web Cam Abortion bill out of committee. *Gwenn Aspen:* New candidate, answered M. *Sara Howard:* Incumbent since 2013, not endorsed, no response, no voting record.
- 9 **Bob Krist:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, introduced P-L, P-L voting record & advocacy.
- 10 *Ernie Chambers:* Returned in 2013 after sitting out for term limits.
- 11 **Merv Riepe:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Greg Hosch:* N-R.
- 12 *Tanya Cook:* Incumbent since 2011, not endorsed, doesn't vote P-L.
- 13 **Jim Smith:** Incumbent since 2011, endorsed P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 14 **Lydia Brasch:** Incumbent since 2011, endorsed P-L, introduced & prioritized P-L, P-L voting record & advocacy. *Scott Japp:* N-R.
- 15 **Dave Bloomfield:** Incumbent since 2011, endorsed P-L, prioritized P-L, P-L voting record & advocacy.
- 16 **Brett Lindstrom:** New candidate, answered P-L. *J. Michael Tesar:* N-R.
- 17 **Jim Scheer:** Incumbent since 2013, endorsed P-L, no voting record or advocacy.
- 18 **Matt Lathrop:** New candidate, answered P-L. *John McCollister:* N-R.
- 19 *Ken Haar:* Incumbent since 2009, not endorsed, doesn't vote P-L.
- 20 **Paul Schumacher:** Incumbent since 2011, answered P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 21 **Jerry Johnson:** Incumbent since 2013, endorsed P-L, no voting record or advocacy.

DISTRICT

- 22 **Mark Kolterman:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Kirk Tesar:* N-R.
- 23 **Kathy Campbell:** Incumbent since 2009, not endorsed, leader on prenatal funding bill but doesn't vote P-L on other bills.
- 24 **Brent Smoyer:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Matt Hansen:* N-R.
- 25 **Colby Coash:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 26 **Dallas Jones:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Patty Pansing Brooks:* N-R.
- 27 *Kate Bolz:* Incumbent since 2013, not endorsed, no voting record.
- 28 **Bob Tiemann:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Roy Baker:* Answered M.
- 29 *Rick Kolowski:* Incumbent since 2013, not endorsed, no voting record.
- 30 *Laura Ebke:* New candidate, answered M. *Phil Hardenburger:* N-R.
- 31 **Les Seiler:** Incumbent since 2012, not endorsed, no voting record or advocacy.
- 32 **Curt Friesen:** New candidate, answered P-L.
- 33 **Mike Gloor:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 34 **Matt Williams:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Luis Sotelo:* New candidate, answered M.
- 35 **Galen Hadley:** Incumbent since 2009, not endorsed, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 36 *John Kuehn:* New candidate, did not respond.
- 37 **Beau McCoy:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, introduced & prioritized P-L, P-L voting record & advocacy.
- 38 **Tyson Larson:** Incumbent since 2011, answered P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy. **Keith Kube:** New candidate, answered P-L.
- 39 **Kate Sullivan:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 40 **Michael Groene:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Roric Paulman:* N-R.
- 41 **Al Davis:** Incumbent since 2013, not endorsed, no voting record or advocacy.
- 42 **Steven Stroup:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Dan Hughes:* New candidate, requested survey & awaiting response.
- 43 *Sue Crawford:* Incumbent since 2013, not endorsed, no voting record.
- 44 *James Bowers:* N-R. *Adam Morfeld:* N-R.
- 45 **Ken Schilz:** Incumbent since 2009, endorsed P-L, P-L voting record, no advocacy.
- 46 **John Stinner:** New candidate, answered P-L. *Mike Meister:* N-R.

www.nebraskarighttolife.org

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Both sites are updated daily with video/
links/posts from national and State sources.
Tell your friends and family on these sites
to join the NRL pages.

WILL TO LIVE: A LEGAL DOCUMENT TO PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS IF YOU CAN NO LONGER SPEAK FOR YOURSELF

National Right to Life welcomes you to download, print and sign a Will to Live, which is a legally binding pro-life alternative to traditional living wills. The document allows you to designate someone to make health care decisions for you if it becomes impossible for you to speak for yourself. It also includes the medical treatments that you do and do not want.

For more information, and to download the form for Nebraska, visit <http://www.nrlc.org/medethics/willtolive>.

NATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE CONVENTION



Attendees unify behind a shared message during the 2014 National Right to Life convention June 26-28 in Louisville, KY.

Nebraska Right to Life President Sandy Danek with Father Frank Pavone of Priests for Life