

Eugene groups clash over abortion

By LORRAINE NELSON
Of the Emerald

Recent threats to legalized abortion have "pro-choice" forces claiming women are in danger of losing their right to have an abortion.

And pro- and anti-abortion forces in Eugene disagree on whether the majority of people in this country support legal abortions.

"The (1973 U.S. Supreme) Court decision hit everyone by surprise. It's no way what the majority wanted then or now," says Tom Frutado, chairer of the local chapter of the Right-to-Life (anti-abortion) group.

Frutado says anti-abortion forces have been trying to overturn the decision but efforts are frustrated because pro-abortion forces have more money.

"It's difficult to fight when politicians are being paid off or whatnot," Frutado says.

Pro-abortion forces disagree. Jeanna Cernazanu and Polly Davis, two organizers for Abortion Rights Week held on campus this week, say Harris and Gallup polls show that more than half of the people surveyed are in favor of legal abortions in some circumstances.

Davis and Cernazanu say they feel threatened by recent gains



Emerald graphic

made by anti-abortion forces.

According to the National Abortion Rights Action League, anti-abortion congressional action in 1978 included:

- * The Dornan Amendment, prohibiting abortions for military women and wives and daughters of military men except in the case of rape or incest, severe and long-lasting physical damage or a threat to the life of the mother.

- * The Young Amendment, prohibiting abortions for women serving in the Peace Corps, with no exceptions.

- * The Beard Amendment, allowing employers to refuse coverage for abortion services

in their health insurance policies.

- * The Hyde Amendment, passed in 1976 and remaining in effect in 1978 and 1979, prohibiting Medicaid abortions except in the case of rape or incest, severe and long-lasting physical damage and a threat to the life of the mother.

Congressional action in early October eliminated the Medicaid provision for abortion in the case of severe and long-lasting physical damage for the mother.

"I think unless pro-choice groups get more active, we are in danger of losing," says Cernazanu.

"Progress is good for Right-to-Life people," Frutado says. "But not as good as it should be."

A major anti-abortion force effort is seeking to call a constitutional convention, he says.

"We want to amend the Constitution to protect life from the moment of conception to the moment of death... with the exception of abortions allowed in the case of endangering the mother," Frutado says.

"Currently, 15 states have called for a constitutional convention to get the amendment," he says.

A two-thirds majority, or the

support of 34 states, is needed to call a constitutional convention.

Davis says she's "not really frightened" by a constitutional convention. The process would take years to complete, she says.

Pro-abortion forces do fear defeat, however, and a Reproductive Rights National Network, based in Chicago, is being organized to pull groups together.

NARAL is sponsoring statewide congressional delegations across the nation to organize voters behind pro-abortion candidates.

In Eugene, at least five groups of women actively held educational meetings with their neighbors to discuss abortion voting records of candidates, Cernazanu says.

Abortion Rights Week serves the purpose of letting people know the threat is there, she says. And a postcard campaign going on this week will let the legislators "know people who are pro-choice are aware of who votes pro-choice."

"Right-to-lifers have made this a life goal," Davis says. "If they've made it a life goal, then I guess I'll have to make it a life goal too."

Wilderness bill awaits debates

Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., may introduce a long-awaited Oregon wilderness bill on the Senate floor as early as November 5, says Jack Desmond, editor of the Oregon Wilderness Coalition's bimonthly magazine, *Wild Oregon*.

"That's what he has told us," says Desmond. "But we're really just going on an assumption."

Hatfield indicated earlier that he would introduce his proposal for what to do with nearly 4.5 million acres of roadless areas in Oregon during the middle of October.

In a letter to Desmond, Hatfield said that he will base his bill on the Carter administration's 425,000 acre wilderness recommendation plus some amendments of his own.

Carter's proposal adds

55,000 acres to a 370,000-acre wilderness proposal issued by the U.S. Forest Service following completion of the Rare II study.

"We're (the OWC) probably going to react pretty strongly against the bill," says Desmond. "The timber industry is probably going to react pretty strongly against the bill too."

Hatfield has tried to design a compromise, Desmond says, but it hasn't worked.

"Out of 4.5 million acres of roadless areas, he is proposing less than 1 million for wilderness."

"Almost all of the lands he'll propose are non-commercial timber lands."

"It's my impression that he's sitting in the timber industry's camp right now," Desmond says.

Hatfield's bill is frustrating to the OWC because the group feels it has tried to deal fairly with Hatfield. It sent several people to hearings held while the senator was gathering public input on the legislation, he says.

One portion of the rumored bill the OWC plans to take issue with is being referred to as "release legislation," he says.

The release legislation would remove a number of roadless areas from future consideration as wilderness areas but not necessarily designate them as areas to be logged.

The timber industry industry may get the false impression that release legislation means a green light for cutting certain areas, says Desmond.



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