



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
IIITH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Legislation NLIRH Supports:

Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act of 2009 (H.R. 1215)

On February 26, 2009, Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA 34th) introduced the Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act of 2009. H.R. 1215 provides detailed guidelines and standards for Immigration detention centers that include increased accountability to the Department of Homeland Security, practices that minimize harm and secure basic human rights to detainees including a sexual assault policy that includes reproductive health care. Under this bill, within 72 hours of being detained, pregnant and nursing women would be protected and released on a reasonable bond or their own recognizance. The legislation will implement secure, protective alternatives to detention program. The bill was referred to the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law on March 13th as well as the Subcommittee on Border, Maritime, and Global Counterterrorism on March 2nd. The Immigration Oversight and Fairness Act of 2009 currently has 30 cosponsors.

Uniting American Families Act of 2009 (H.R. 1024/S.424)

On February 12, 2009, Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-NY 8th) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced the Uniting American Families Act which would allow U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents to sponsor permanent partners whom they cannot marry for residency (and eventual citizenship, if they wish) in the United States. This would mean that same-sex couples, or couples in which one of the persons identifies as transgender, would be able to sponsor their partners from abroad if they meet specific criteria that deems them “permanent partners.” Granting permanent partners the same citizenship rights as spouses prevents the separation of families and ensures that discrimination based on sexual orientation is not an obstacle in the path to citizenship. On February 12th, the Senate version of the bill was read twice and referred to the Senate Committee on the Judiciary with 20 cosponsors. On March 16th, the House companion bill was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary’s Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law with 115 cosponsors.

Prevention First Act of 2009 (H.R. 463/S. 21)

Introduced by Representative Louise Slaughter (D-NY 28th) and Senator Harry Reid (D-NV) in the House and Senate respectively, the Prevent First Act would expand access to health care services and educational programs aimed at reducing unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and the need for abortion. The Prevention First Act would also increase Title X funding; expand state options to cover family planning for low-income individuals; seek to end health insurance discrimination against women who seek prescription coverage; fund emergency contraception (EC) education; provide EC to sexual assault survivors upon request in hospital emergency rooms; and ensure that any education concerning the use of contraception is medically accurate and includes information about both the health benefits and failure rates of contraceptives. NLIRH supports this legislation aimed at increasing access to comprehensive family planning services to low-income individuals, who are disproportionately women of color. On January 13, 2009, the House bill was referred to the House Ways and Means, House Energy and Commerce, and the House Education and Labor Committees and currently has 130 cosponsors. The Senate version of the bill has 20 cosponsors and was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on January 6th.



Legislation NLIRH opposes:

Ultrasound Informed Consent Act (H.R. 649)

Representative Jim Jordan (R-OH 4th) introduced the Ultrasound Informed Consent Act on January 22, 2009. The bill aims to amend the Public Health Service Act to require that abortion providers perform an ultrasound prior to the woman giving consent to an abortion. This bill undermines women's choice through the use of coercive methods to dissuade pregnant women from obtaining an abortion by requiring an unnecessary medical procedure, increasing the cost of the procedure and making it less accessible to low-income women. H.R. 649 was referred to House Committee on Energy and Commerce on and currently has 64 cosponsors.

Immigration and Nationality Act of 2009 (H.R. 126)

On January 6 2009, Representative Elton Gallegly (R-CA 24th) introduced H.R. 126 which would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to limit citizenship at birth to persons whose mothers are legal residents or citizens. This bill would repeal the first sentence of section one of the fourteenth amendment of the Constitution of the United States. H.R. 126 was referred to the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law on February 9th and currently has no cosponsors. NLIRH opposes legislation that restricts avenues to legal citizenship as they increase discrimination and criminalize undocumented mothers and women.