
THE CONCEPT

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Stefanie Renee Jones

NCRTL Oratory Contest Winner Heads to National Right to Life 2003 Annual Convention

Greensboro, NC—Stefanie Renee Jones, winner of the North Carolina Right to Life (NCRTL) Oratory Contest, will be competing at the annual Jane B. Thompson Oratory Contest 2003 sponsored by National Right to Life. The contest is being held in conjunction with National Right to Life's annual convention in St. Louis, Missouri, on July 5.

"We are very proud of Stefanie Renee Jones and of all the participants in this year's oratory contest," stated Barbara Holt, President of NCRTL. "The students did a wonderful job, and we are looking forward to having North Carolina represented at the National Right to Life Oratory Contest in July."

The eligible high school juniors and seniors who participated in the NCRTL Oratory Contest had to write an original speech on abortion, infanticide, or euthanasia that was five to seven minutes in length. Students were encouraged to use up-to-date factual information in the construction of their speeches. The competition was held May 3 at the Guilford Convention Center in Greensboro. The judges were Steve Whitfield, Kimberly Wood, and Nancy Wells.

Stefanie Renee Jones, the winner of the NCRTL Oratory Contest, and Jammie Gant, the runner up, received plaques to recognize their achievement in placing 1st and 2nd in the competition. Additionally, the winner receives \$300 toward travel expenses to the national competition. All contestants received a certificate of participation, and a packet of pro-life materials for their personal use and as mementos of their involvement in the competition.

"All of the students did well," said Barbara Holt. "The judges said they had a tough decision in trying to rank the contestants. North Carolina Right to Life congratulates the winner and looks forward to next year's competition."

North Carolina General Assembly Update: What's Still Alive and What's Not

May 1, 2003 marked the crossover deadline for legislation at the North Carolina General Assembly. (Crossover is the date by which legislation that has no appropriations associated with it must pass at least one chamber in order to be alive for the remainder of the session.) The following is a list of pro-life bills, which were introduced this session but were not considered. Some are still alive until the legislature adjourns sometime this summer. *Please note: The House bills are discussed because the opportunity for legislative action is more likely than in the Senate.*

Abortion-Woman's Right to Know (H998), North Carolina Right to Life's number one agenda item, sponsored by Representatives Linda Johnson and Paul Stam, is still alive since it has budget implications. The bill requires that a pregnant woman be told 24 hours before she receives an abortion: the name of the physician who will perform the abortion; the medical risks involved for the particular abortion procedure

she will have; the medical risks in carrying her child to term; and the probable gestational age of her unborn child at the time when the abortion is to be performed. Also, she must be told if the person performing the abortion does NOT have hospital privileges or malpractice insurance. The pregnant woman must be offered additional information, such as fetal development and alternatives to abortion. The legislation does provide for medical emergencies and for civil remedies. Thus far, the Rules Committee, where the bill was sent when it was introduced, has not brought the legislation up for consideration. The bill has 59 cosponsors, a majority of House members, and even more members who have said they will vote for the bill when it comes up.

Take Action: The cosponsors of the House need to hear from both constituents and non-constituents, urging them to bring the bill up for a vote. North Carolina Right to Life is asking all pro-lifers who have Internet access to use our Legislative Action Center at www.ncrtl.org to send e-mails to legislators. In this way, North Carolina Right to Life can track which legislators are getting mail and what issues are being addressed. The Senate version of this bill is S571, and the primary sponsors are Senators Austin Allran and Virginia Foxx. The Senate is less likely than the House to bring this legislation up in committee.

Abortion-Parental Consent Notarized (H830) would close the loophole that has permitted minors to get abortions by submitting forged parental consent forms. The leg-

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isolation is sponsored by Rep. Mark Hilton and has 62 cosponsors. Because the bill did not make the crossover deadline, it appears that—barring some creative maneuvers by the leadership in the House—the loophole in our Parental Consent law may not be closed this year. The Senate version is S570-Notarized Consent for Minors' Abortion, sponsored by Sen. Austin Allran.

No Abortions Under the State Plan (H854), sponsored by Rep. Russell Capps, would discontinue the practice of the state paying for the abortions of state employees through the State Employees' Comprehensive Major Medical Plan. Although the bill affects the budget and is still alive following the crossover deadline, this issue will most likely be addressed through the budget process. The Senate version is S569, sponsored by Sen. Austin Allran.

"Choose Life" License Plate (H64), sponsored by Rep. Mitch Gillespie, survived the crossover deadline. It provides that the Division of Motor Vehicles produce a license plate bearing the words "Choose Life," and that the funds generated from the sale of these plates be transferred quarterly to a "Crisis Pregnancy Fund" to be distributed to non-for-profit agencies that provide pregnancy crisis services. None of the funds can be given to agencies that are involved or associated with abortion activities. The Senate version is S96, sponsored by Senator Jerry Tillman.

Refuse to Abort/Extend Conscience Protection (H962), sponsored by Rep Mark Hilton, provides that physicians, nurses, pharmacists, or other health care providers, who object to abortion on moral, ethical, or religious grounds, can refuse to perform or participate in medical procedures, or prescribe or dispense drugs or devices that result in an abortion. Their refusal can not result in their suffering any damages, or disciplinary or recriminatory actions. The Senate version is S942, sponsored by Senator Austin Allran.

Ban on Assisted Suicide (S145), sponsored by Sen. James Forrester, will be alive for the rest of the session. The NCGA web site does not reflect the changes in the bill from a ban on physician-assisted suicide to a complete ban on assisted suicide. If it passes, the bill would ban assisted suicide and promote pain

management and palliative care. Because North Carolina is one of several states without any safeguards to prevent assisted suicide, it is important that this legislation becomes law.

Take Action: Please contact your Senator and ask him to support Sen. Forrester's Ban on Assisted Suicide (S145). In particular, call or e-mail Sen. Fletcher Hartsell, the chairman of the Judiciary II committee where the bill was sent, to tell him you support this legislation and want him to bring the bill back up for a vote. There is no House counterpart to S145.

Murder of Pregnant N.C. Woman Highlights Need for State and National Unborn Victims of Violence Legislation

Recently, the media spotlight has been focused on the murders of Laci Peterson and her unborn son, Conner, in California. Laci's husband, Scott Peterson, has been charged with double homicide for the deaths of his wife and unborn son, which is allowed under California law. Sadly, very little media attention has been given to a similar case in North Carolina, which recently surfaced on April 21, when the dismembered body of a young pregnant woman was found stuffed inside a trash can in Alamance County. The 20-year-old woman, identified by police as April Greer, was eight and one-half months pregnant when she was reported missing in March. According to police, she was still carrying her unborn baby girl—whom she had named Heaven Leigh—when she was killed. Her former live-in boyfriend was arrested two days after her body was found and charged with first degree murder.

While California law allows criminals to be punished separately for the death of an unborn child, current North Carolina law does not. According to North Carolina General Statute 14-18.2, a perpetrator can be punished with a higher penalty for causing injury to a pregnant woman that results in a miscarriage or stillbirth. But the law does not treat the unborn child as a second victim, which means that in the case of April Geer, the perpetrator can only be punished for her death.

A bill (H1106) introduced in the State House this year by Rep. Edgar Starnes (R-Caldwell) would have changed North Carolina law so

that the unborn child would be recognized as a murder victim in the same way that the law recognizes the mother as a victim. H1106-Fetal Homicide defined the unborn child as "an individual member of the species *Homo sapiens*, at any stage of development in utero, who was alive at the time of the homicidal act and died as a result thereof, whether before, during, or after birth." Unfortunately for North Carolina, H1106 did not make the crossover deadline.

Take Action: It is still important that members of the N.C. House and Senate hear from their constituents regarding the need for this legislation. Sen. Hugh Webster is trying to get similar legislation passed in the Senate through a committee substitute to an unrelated previously introduced bill.

According to the National Right to Life (NRLC), 26 states have enacted laws that recognize unborn children as human victims of violent crimes covered by state laws. Fourteen (14) of these states provide this protection throughout the period of in utero development, while the other 12 provide protection during certain specified stages of development. Congress is also considering similar legislation at the federal level (*see page 3 for more*).

The North Carolina Right to Life web site has been updated.

Check us out on-line at
[www.ncrtl.org!](http://www.ncrtl.org)

- √ Visit our new Legislative Action Center, where you can read timely action alerts about state and national legislation, and contact your elected officials.
- √ Find out who represents you at the N.C. General Assembly and in Congress by entering your zip code.
- √ Get information about upcoming pro-life events across North Carolina.
- √ Research North Carolina abortion facts.

National Legislative Update

Unborn Victims of Violence Act: Congress is currently considering a bill that would make it a federal crime to injure or kill an unborn child during the commission of a federal crime of violence. The Unborn Victims of Violence Act (S.146), sponsored by Senator Mike Dewine (R-Ohio), recognizes that when a criminal attacks a pregnant woman and harms or kills her unborn child, he should be held responsible for two victims.

A companion bill—H.R. 1997—was recently introduced in the House by Representative Melissa Hart (R-Penn.) and renamed “Laci and Conner’s Law” in honor of a request made by the family of California murder victim, Laci Peterson. In a letter addressed to Rep. Hart and Sen. Dewine, Laci’s family expressed their support for the Unborn Victims of Violence Act and asked that the legislation be renamed after Laci and her unborn son, Conner. The letter, which was signed by Laci’s mother and five other family members, includes the following statement: “Knowing that perpetrators who murder pregnant women will pay the price not only for the loss of the mother, but the baby as well, will help bring justice for these victims and hopefully act as a deterrent to those considering such heinous acts.”

The White House has urged Congress to pass the Unborn Victims of Violence Act this year. At an April 25 press briefing, White House press secretary, Ari Fleischer, responded to a question about the Laci Peterson double murder case by stating: “The President does believe that when an unborn child is injured or killed during the commission of a crime of violence, the law should recognize what most people immediately recognize, and that is that such a crime has two victims.”

According to a national Fox News and Opinion Dynamics poll released April 25, the majority of registered voters agree with President Bush. The survey asked: “If Scott Peterson is convicted of killing his pregnant wife Laci, do you think he should be charged with one count of homicide for murdering his wife, or two counts of homicide for murdering both his wife and unborn son?” Eighty-four (84) percent of registered voters said that a double homicide charge is appropriate in the Peterson murder case. Only 7 percent said that a one-victim charge would

be appropriate. The poll, which was conducted April 22-23, surveyed 900 registered voters and has a margin of error of +/-3 percent. (National Right to Life Committee, Press Release, 4/25/03).

Ban on Human Cloning: On February 27, the U.S. House passed H.R. 534, a bill that would ban the cloning of human embryos, even for research purposes. Two bills are currently before the Senate, but only one—S.245, sponsored by Senators Sam Brownback (R-Kansas) and Mary Landrieu (D-Louis.)—would completely ban human cloning. Senator Elizabeth Dole (R-N. Carolina) is a co-sponsor of this legislation. Senators Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) have introduced competing legislation (S. 303) that would allow human embryos to be cloned and then killed for research purposes. Senator John Edwards (D-N. Carolina) has indicated his support for the Hatch-Feinstein “clone and kill” ban.

Take Action: The National Right to Life Committee and North Carolina Right to Life are calling upon pro-life citizens to contact their senators and urge them to reject the Hatch-Feinstein phony ban (S. 303) and to pass the Brownback-Landrieu bill (S. 245).

Partial-Birth Abortion Ban: On March 13, 2003, the U. S. Senate voted 64-33 in favor of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003 (S.3). The bill will soon be taken up by the House. Senator Elizabeth Dole (R) voted with the majority to ban partial-birth abortions. On every vote, Sen. Dole voted the pro-life position. In fact, Sen. Dole was the only woman in the Senate to vote **AGAINST** the Harkin amendment to S. 3, which states, “It is the sense of the Senate that the decision of the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade* [410 U.S. 113 (1973)] was appropriate and secures an important constitutional right; and such decision should not be overturned.” Please thank Sen. Dole for her pro-life votes. She needs to hear that pro-life North Carolinians appreciate her pro-life voting record.

North Carolina’s other senator—John Edwards (D)—was not present for the final vote on S. 3, but he did make himself available to vote in favor of the Harkin amendment, endorsing *Roe v. Wade*. Sen. Edwards also voted for the Boxer motion, which would have sent S. 3 back to the Judiciary to examine constitutional issues.

Take Action: Please pass the word to your friends and family about how our two senators voted on this ban on partial birth abortions. The lives of the unborn depend upon the people of this state knowing how our senators are voting!

To Contact Your Representatives:

You can send an e-mail to your state and national elected officials through our Legislative Action Center at www.ncrtl.org.

For those of you who do not have Internet access, you can contact your state representatives by calling the N.C. General Assembly at (919) 733-4111. Call your local board of elections to find out who represents you. You can reach Congress through the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

Upcoming Events

National Right to Life Annual Convention

July 3, 4 & 5, 2003
Hyatt Regency
at Union Station
St. Louis, Missouri

Life Chain Events

October 5, 2003
Cities across North Carolina will hold life chain events this year. For more information, contact Rose McCreery, Life Chain Coordinator at: (919) 847-8375.

North Carolina Right to Life 30th Anniversary

Tentatively scheduled for November 8, 2003
Greensboro, North Carolina
Watch for more details in upcoming newsletters.



From the President's Desk

by Barbara Holt

Grassroots lobbying in massive amounts moves the legislature to act on pro-life legislation. When large numbers of the public contact their elected officials to tell them they care about pending legislation, then the elected officials respond because they equate pressure with the importance of the legislation to the voting public.

This session, I was told by a member of the House leadership that the Abortion-Woman's Right to Know (H998) will not be brought up because it is viewed as too controversial. Unless the legislature hears from those who elected them that NOT bringing up the Abortion-Woman's Right to Know bill is more controversial than bringing it up, neither the House nor the Senate will consider any of our pro-life bills.

We need your help especially now! Since the House appears more likely to take up this legislation, all pro-lifers should immediately send e-mails through our Legislative Action Center at www.ncrtl.org, or make phone calls to House Speakers Jim Black (919-733-3451) and Richard Morgan (919-715-3010).

When writing or calling, pro-lifers should ask their legislators to use their leadership position to get the Abortion-Woman's Right to Know (H998) brought up for a vote in committee and on the House floor so that the legislation can be considered in the Senate before the end of the session.

After you send your e-mails or make your phone calls, get 10 friends and

family members to do the same. Ask them to pass the alert on to their circle of friends and family. You should also ask your pastor to run an announcement in the church bulletin that urges the congregation to send e-mails or to make phone calls to House Speakers Jim Black and Richard Morgan, and to their own House members.

Time is running short, so it is urgent that you and others take action immediately! Finally, please let North Carolina Right to Life know about any responses you receive from your e-mails or phone calls. You can contact us by e-mail through our web site at www.ncrtl.org, or by calling our office at (336) 274-5433.

Honorariums and Memorials

To make a donation in memory of, or to honor, a friend or loved one, send your donation and the names of those being remembered or honored to North Carolina Right to Life. Be sure to enclose the name and address of the person who should receive the acknowledgment about the gift (i.e., the name and address of the person being honored, or the name of the loved one who is being remembered). If you do not wish your donation to be listed in our newsletter, please let us know so we can honor your wishes.

**In Honor of Kathleen McElwee
by
Sean and Beth Ann Gargan**

**In Memory of Rose Goldrick,
mother of Mary Eastwood
by
Joseph and Carmela Scutti,
Ernest and Karen Fikar,
Alan and Grace Harte,
John and Anne Eastwood,
and Richard (Dick) Miller**

**In Memory of Bert O' Steen,
brother of David G. O' Steen
by
The Rodney Holt Family**

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North Carolina Right to Life, Inc. Statement of Purpose

North Carolina Right to Life was incorporated in October 1973 for the purpose of engaging in educational, charitable, scientific, literary, and public policy projects. NCRTL is a nonprofit, non-denominational service organization dedicated to protecting and fostering the most basic value of our society, life itself.

We recognize and seek to enact the injunctions found in Proverbs 31:8—to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and to protect the rights of the helpless. Therefore, we advocate positive action to protect the unborn, the impaired, the elderly, and all others who are disadvantaged or defenseless at any age or stage of development from the moment of fertilization to natural death. We work within the law to change the law, as well as to change the minds and hearts of the public.