



ROCK the BOAT

Join our Virtual Event!
Tuesday, July 13 at 6:00 p.m.

Buy Tickets: ppvotes.org/rocktheboat

Ensuring Abortion Access for All

Let's pass the Equality in Abortion Coverage Act

Recently, abortion bans are back in national news as states, emboldened by the current conservative makeup of the federal court, are passing increasingly restrictive and harmful laws that challenge the protections of *Roe v. Wade*.

Here in Rhode Island, we've protected the right to safe, legal abortion, but we know many are left without access to the care they need. In fact, state laws prohibit 1 in 3 Rhode Islanders – state employees and people enrolled in Medicaid – from using their insurance to cover abortion.

Liana Cassar (D-66) to introduce the *Equality in Abortion Coverage Act* (S267 and H5787) during this legislative session.

Passing this law is a matter of fairness, equity, and justice. Without Medicaid coverage for abortion, these harmful bans impact people of color and people with low incomes the hardest.

We have the power to change it – your support and contributions help us keep up the fight!

This summer and fall, PPV!RI and our allies will be working around the state to educate residents on the need to ensure access to the full spectrum of sexual and reproductive health care – including abortion. Watch out for messages on how to get involved!

ABORTION
ACCESS
FOR All

The right to abortion is meaningless if you don't have access to essential, affordable sexual and reproductive health care. We must continue to fight to pass the *Equality in Abortion Coverage Act* to remove these harmful state laws and add abortion coverage to our state's Medicaid program.

We thank the record number of cosponsors (22 in the Senate and 26 in House!) who joined sponsors Senator Bridget Valverde (D-35) and Representative

Meet Maria Zou

Brown University student leading organizing work in Rhode Island

Maria is a member of Brown's Class of 2022 with a double major in International and Public Affairs and Biology. Born and raised in a suburb outside of Cleveland, OH, Maria came to Rhode Island to break out of her comfort zone – and along the way she learned to harness the power of her own voice!

This year, Maria has worked as the Youth Organizing Fellow, leading community organizing efforts with a focus on young people to support our legislative priorities at the State House. **Continue reading on the back to learn more about Maria!**

Meet Maria Zou (continued)

How did you get involved with Planned Parenthood?

MZ: I started as a volunteer with the patient advocacy program, talking with Planned Parenthood patients in the Providence health center about advocating for their rights. From there I got connected with the Generation Action program, which is what I wanted to do all along - work with young people to fight for reproductive rights!



Maria holds up one of her favorite foods!

Why is this work so important to you?

MZ: 2019 was my first year in Rhode Island and I was so blown away to watch the *Reproductive Privacy Act* pass. It really opened my

eyes - seeing how people could come together and pass this law. That same year, my home state of Ohio passed a six-week abortion ban, one of the most restrictive in the country. I realized for the first time the impact of state-specific laws on people's lives.

What do you hope for the future of reproductive freedom in Rhode Island?

MZ: I want to see young people get all the tools and information they need to live their lives however they want. We need to pass policies to update our sex ed curriculum, make menstrual products more available, and educate teens about their rights - it's a start to a better future.

Thanks, Maria! By supporting the Generation Action program, you're investing in the future of our state and helping train the next generation of Planned Parenthood leaders.

STARS Speak Out!

Members of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England's STARS (Students Teaching About Responsible Sexuality) Program spoke out and submitted testimony to support S463 / H5604 - bills that require inclusive, culturally competent, sex-positive, and affirming sex education in Rhode Island schools.

PPSNE peer educators help fill the gaps in our state's sex ed curriculum. We must update our state's outdated mandate to ensure all students have access to

"It is extremely unfair for students to be left without the information we need to live safe and healthy lives."
- Eli, age 18

"All of my sexual education has come through PPSNE or my family. It is evident that our sexual education system is failing [us]."
- Ilse, age 16

sexual education that is medically accurate, inclusive, and pleasure-based, giving young people the information they need to live healthy, full lives.

Current Rhode Island 100 Voices Members. *100 Voices for Planned Parenthood is a group of bold philanthropic leaders who share a fierce and unapologetic passion for protecting sexual and reproductive rights and who have made a gift of \$1,000 or more to PPV!RI.*

Rev. Dr. David Ames and Dr. Carol Landau
William Aselyne and Jeff Stryker
George T. Boyer
Mary and Nate Chace
Mrs. Constance F. Evrard
Patricia Fuller
Merle and Stanley Goldstein
Doree Goodman and Michael Gerhardt
Dr. Alma Guerrero Bready and Dr. Barrett Bready
Ms. Cynthia Hughes and Mr. John F. Hughes
Ms. Monica Jainschigg and Mr. Nicholas E Jainschigg

Ms. Simone Joyaux*
Ms. Sally E. Lapidés and Mr. Arthur P. Solomon
Tina and Jerry McIntyre
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New England Health Care Employees Union
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Lynn Taylor and Boris Bally
Mr. Don E. Wineberg, Esq. and Mrs. Kitty Wineberg
Connie Worthington and Terry Tullis
Hon. Myrth York and Mr. David Green
Rhode Island Coalition Against Gun Violence

** Sadly, in May 2021, Simone passed away. She was a former board member, fierce champion, and dedicated supporter. Simone will be incredibly missed.*