



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

## Senator Krueger & The Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus Embark on Battle to Protect Reproductive Rights By Educating Others

LIZ KRUEGER May 9, 2011

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## Members of The Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus Host The Reproductive Rights and Health Information Fair and Vow to Take Every Route Necessary to Protect Reproductive Rights

(Albany, NY)-- In a year that has seen Women's Reproductive Rights come under attack at the National and State levels, members of the NYS Legislature have mobilized to create a Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus (BPCLC), coordinating their efforts to ensure that such attacks will never gain traction in New York State. In their first public event, a mere two months after forming, the BPCLC joined with pro choice advocates and health providers throughout the State to host the Reproductive Rights and Information Fair, an event highlighting the BPCLC's desire to shed more light on complex issues surrounding reproductive rights.

Open to the public, with invites sent to all Legislators and their staff, the Reproductive Rights and Health Information Fair provided substantive information on the background and current status of critical issues. By providing this opportunity to collect factual materials, ask questions and discuss concerns about topics surrounding reproductive rights, the BPCLC, and co-sponsoring organizations, hope to diminish the impact of misinformation that often surround these complex issues.

Among the topics discussed at the event include: the Reproductive Health Act; access to abortion care; the religious voice on reproductive health care; adolescent health care and comprehensive sexuality education; reproductive health issues for immigrant communities.

Senator Liz Krueger (D-Manhattan) said, "We have seen, across the country, a systematic attempt to strip women of basic access to reproductive rights in Congress and State Capitols. I stand here today with my colleagues to say, 'No way. Not in New York.' This Health Information Fair is just the first step of many that the Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative

Caucus will take to ensure that New York not only stops any attempt to hamper women's reproductive rights in our State, but stays a national leader in promoting and protecting a women's right to choose."

Assemblymember Joel Miller (R,I-Poughkeepsie) said, "As the Federal Government loses its way and moves towards an anti-women religious right policy, we at the State level have to ensure that women in New York have the right of choice when it comes to controlling their own body. I join with other reasonable Republicans in supporting women and the pro-choice movement."

Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (D-Yonkers) said, "One of the most important goals of the BPCLC is to make sure that our colleagues in the legislature recognize that reproductive rights are matters of public health and that it is crucial to protect the right to choose in New York State. This fair represents a great opportunity for our caucus to join advocates and supporters and share this message with our colleagues so that they understand the critical health issues that women are facing today in New York and around the nation. I am looking forward to an open dialogue at this fair and I am pleased to continue working with my colleagues in the legislature, particularly those in the Bi-Partisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus, to make sure that New York State is a leader in protecting reproductive rights."

Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (D-Manhattan) said, "New York State has always been a leader in protecting the reproductive rights of women, and we were ahead of the curve when the Legislature legalized abortion three years before the landmark 1973 decision in Roe v. Wade. Unfortunately, since then, forces around the nation have been determined to strip women of their hard-fought rights to privacy, reproductive self-determination, and ownership over their bodies. We have formed the New York State Bipartisan Pro-Choice Legislative Caucus because we will not allow small but vocal minority of moralistic right-winger to take away our rights."

Senator Gustavo Rivera (D-Bronx) said, “As founding members of the Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus, we are proud to stand together to work on behalf of New York families and ensure that any potential encroachment on a women's rights to make decisions about her health are met with opposition and are rejected in the State of New York. We are a strong and diverse coalition that I believe will be successful in fighting a national anti-woman and anti-choice tide as well as continue to build on New York's commitment to women's reproductive health.”

Assemblymember Teresa R. Sayward (R,I – Willsboro) said, “Women's reproductive rights are not a partisan issue. They are a health issue and government should not have a voice in the reproductive health of women. We stand here today to ensure our voices are heard and to protect women's rights.”

Andrew Stern, interim Executive Director for NARAL Pro-Choice New York said, “We are thrilled that our pro-choice elected officials are coming together to spread the word about reproductive health and rights. The launch of the caucus, and the members’ sponsorship of the first reproductive health teach-in, demonstrates the strong role these leaders are taking in Albany, representing and standing up for the pro-choice values of New Yorkers. We look forward to working together to pass the Reproductive Health Act, which will codify Roe v. Wade in New York State, and ensure that the reproductive freedom of all New Yorkers remains protected.”

M. Tracy Brooks, CEO and President of Family Planning Advocates of New York State said, “With the formation of the Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus, New York State has again proven itself a national leader in advocating for access to comprehensive reproductive health care. The formation of the caucus could not be timelier as House leadership in Washington, D.C. and lawmakers in various Statehouses throughout the nation attack access to this crucial women’s health care. This information day is the first of many ways

that members of the pro choice caucus will inform colleagues and legislative staff about the variety of issues that encompass access to reproductive health care.”

Donna Lieberman, Executive Director of the New York Civil Liberties Union said, “We applaud Senator Krueger and her colleagues in the Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus for taking a leadership role in educating the public about reproductive care. It is essential that lawmakers inform their communities about how reproductive health care is vital to women, families and children.”

Simone Ward, Vice President for Public Affairs at Planned Parenthood of New York City said, “We want to thank the newly formed Bipartisan Pro Choice Legislative Caucus for hosting this information fair, so that Legislators and their staff can get first-hand information about the reproductive health care issues and legislation facing New Yorkers today. Now, at a time when States across the country are facing serious attacks on reproductive rights, we’re thankful to have such amazing reproductive rights champions representing us in Albany.”

### **BPCLC Members**

Senators: Eric Adams; Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.; Tony Avella; Neil D. Breslin; David Carlucci; Martin Dilan; Tom Duane; Adriano Espaillat; Michael Gianaris; Ruth Hassell-Thompson; Jeff Klein; Liz Krueger; Velmanette Montgomery; Suzi Oppenheimer; Kevin S. Parker; Jose Peralta; Bill Perkins; Gustavo Rivera; John L. Sampson; Diane J. Savino; Jose M. Serrano; Malcom A. Smith; Daniel L. Squadron; Tony Ann Stavisky; Andrea Stewart-Cousins; David J. Valesky.

Assemblymembers: Carmen E. Arroyo; Jonathan L. Bing; William F. Boyland, Jr.; James F. Brennan; Harry B. Bronson; Kevin A. Cahill; Clifford W. Crouch; Jeffrey Dinowitz; Janet L. Duprey; Steve Englebright; Herman D. Farrell, Jr.; Sandy Galef; Deborah J. Glick; Richard N. Gottfried; Aileen M. Gunther; Andrew Hevesi; Sam Hoyt; Ellen Jaffee; Hakeem Jeffries; Brian

Kavanagh; Micah Kellner; Rory I. Lancman; Charles D. Lavine; Barbara Lifton; Guillermo Linares; Donna A. Lupardo; Alan Maisel; Margaret M. Markey; Joel M. Miller; Joan L. Millman; Catherine Nolan; Daniel J. O'Donnell; Amy Paulin; Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes; N. Nick Perry; Audrey I. Pfeffer; J. Gary Pretlow; Annette Robinson; Linda B. Rosenthal; Addie J. Russell; Teresa R. Sayward; William Scarborough; Michelle Schimel; Mike Spano; Fred W. Thiele, Jr.; Michele R. Titus; David I. Weprin; Keith L.T. Wright.

**Advocates Participating in Information Fair**

Call to Action; Center for Reproductive Rights; Community Health Care Network; Concerned Clergy for Choice; Diverse Communities Health Initiative; Family Planning Advocates of NYS; Feminist Majority Foundation; Hispanic Federation; NARAL Pro Choice NY; National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health; New York Alliance for Women's Health; New York Civil Liberties Union; NY Abortion Access Fund; Physicians for Reproductive Health; Planned Parenthood New York City; Planned Parenthood of Rochester Syracuse Region; Raising Women's Voices; Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice; Westchester Coalition for Legal Abortion; Women's Bar Association.

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