

# BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW NEWS



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## 2007 Poster Contest

The grand prize winning poster will be used as part of a national campaign to challenge the violent, drug-addicted, starved, surgically-enhanced images of women and to fight against industries that profit from women's dissatisfaction with their bodies.

For info go to: [www.now.org](http://www.now.org).



## CHAPTER NEWS

At long last we've updated our signature banner, brochure, and T-shirts to reflect our merger with the Queens chapter! For a preview, come to the next meeting on June 12th. The brochure update reflects our latest actions and contact info. The redesigned T-shirts, with their great new color and design, are much more flattering. And have you all checked out the chapter website ([www.brooklynqueensnow.org](http://www.brooklynqueensnow.org))? If not, you're bound to be impressed! Our webmaster, Debra 'aka drumchik' Cagwin, is just the best!

Brooklyn-Queens NOW has been at the anti-war demonstrations, at anti-Alito and anti-Roberts rallies, at clinic "pray-ins" which would bar women from exercising their right to choose, at state ERA strategy meetings, at city council hearings which may result in electronic voting (...More inside). We've brought shameful prison conditions to light and made our state representatives take note. We've raised our voices at the immigration rallies. In short, we've represented YOU on issues which affect our lives. We're hoping that in the fall, we'll see NOW chapters at Pace, Queens College and Brooklyn College. NYU already has a chapter. Young Feminists Task Force chair, Rachele, would love to hear your ideas. Contact her at [RachelSuis@aol.com](mailto:RachelSuis@aol.com)

We've made some other decisions as well. Starting in September, we're moving chapter meetings to the first Thursday of the month (unless otherwise posted). We're hoping to see more of you at the meetings. We move them around the two boroughs to meet more of our membership. If you'd like to offer your living-room for a meeting, call 718 951-7441 and let us know. *In honor of August 26th commemoration of women's suffrage, we encourage you to participate in a feminist event and/or contribute to [www.ERACampaign.net](http://www.ERACampaign.net) <<http://www.ERACampaign.net>> to bring women into the Constitution.*

# BROOKLYN-QUEENS NOW CHAPTER CALENDAR

Chapter meetings take place at 7pm, unless otherwise noted.  
Call the numbers below for exact location and directions.



<b>Jun 12</b>	Chapter Meeting. Sheepshead Bay, Call 347-515-1410
<b>July 10</b>	Chapter Meeting. Midwood, Call 718-951-7441
<b>July 21-23</b>	National NOW Conference, Albany, NY
<b>August</b>	No Chapter meeting scheduled
<b>Sept 7</b>	Chapter Meeting. Homecrest area. Call 718 891-2490
<b>Oct 5</b>	Chapter Meeting. Sheepshead Bay area. Call 718 769-8901
<b>Nov 2</b>	Chapter Meeting. Sheepshead Bay area. Call 718 891-8590
<b>Dec 7</b>	Chapter Meeting. Forest Hills area. Call 718 263-7638



## ACTION ALERTS



### STOP DRIVE-THROUGH MASTECTOMIES

Since the 1990s, women in our country have had their health placed second to health care industry profits. After the fear of discovering they have breast cancer, women who have undergone surgical procedures to remove the cancer are then pushed out of the hospital, sometimes within 24 hours, to somehow cope with the open wounds and physical therapy and accompanying pain alone... all in the name of the hospital's bottom line.

There are bills in the House of Representatives and in the U. S. Senate which would mandate a minimum hospital stay. Sadly, nothing has happened since April, 2005. This year, an election year, is the time to change that. Of note is that NEITHER CLINTON NOR SCHUMER are co-sponsors of the Senate bill S-910. In the House, Brooklyn and Queens representatives are mostly behind the legislation HR 1849, but still, the bill languishes in committee.

Here's a link to the website and some information about the bills: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

Title: A bill to require that health plans provide coverage for a minimum hospital stay for mastectomies, lumpectomies, and lymph node dissection for the treatment of breast cancer and coverage for secondary consultations.

Latest Major Action: 4/26/2005 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. In the House, the bill was referred to Ways and Means and various subcommittees. Nothing has happened in either house.

**ACTION: Contact your representatives, Senator Schumer and Senator Clinton. Tell them you want to see these bills become law this year. NOTE THAT CLINTON (who is up for re-election this November) SITS ON THE COMMITTEE TO WHICH THE BILL WAS SENT.**

Senator Charles Schumer 476 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510-3204 202-224-6542 Fax: 202-228-3027	Senator Hillary Clinton 13 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510-3203 202-224-4451 Fax: 202-228-0282
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## **TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS**

Trafficking is a modern form of slavery. Women and children are especially vulnerable to violent coercion, and threats of deportation and arrest. They are subjected to the worst abuses of trafficking and are highly valuable to the sex industry- a multi-billion dollar enterprise.

An estimated 14,000 to 17,000 persons are trafficked annually into the U.S. for purposes of sexual and labor exploitation. It is estimated that 15,000 to 20,000 victims of human trafficking currently reside in New York State. New York currently has NO laws against human trafficking. However, New York does have laws against prostitution - these laws often punish victims of trafficking, who are forced to perform certain illegal acts against their will.

Brooklyn-Queens NOW supports Assembly Bill A. 1898-B. This bill makes the specific crime of “trafficking” a felony, and provides services to victims, entitling them to benefits and victim compensation funds. Ask Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver to support this legislation.

Speaker Sheldon Silver, New York State Assembly, LOB 932, Albany, NY 12248

For more information: [www.equalitynow.org](http://www.equalitynow.org)

## **Pharmacists Do Not Have the Right to Determine Women's Health Care and Childbearing Decisions**

Reports of pharmacists refusing to fill legally-prescribed prescriptions for birth control, including emergency contraceptives, have surfaced in states across the nation, including California, Georgia, Louisiana, Illinois, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, Washington state and Wisconsin. These refusals to dispense prescription contraceptives appear to be based on a pharmacist's personal religious beliefs, not on legitimate medical or professional concerns about safety and the welfare of the customer.

The same pharmacists who refuse to dispense contraceptives because of their personal beliefs often refuse to hand a woman's prescription to another pharmacist on site or refer her to a different pharmacy. This further compounds their unprofessional action and seriously impedes the right of women to seek timely and safe prescriptions, especially when their whole physical, psychological and family planning future is at stake.

It is arbitrary and discriminatory for pharmacists to refuse to dispense legally-prescribed birth control, holding the power over customers and delaying or preventing women from meeting their most basic health needs, including pregnancy prevention and treatment of various medical conditions. Pharmacist refusals are particularly burdensome to rural and low-income women, who may be unable to find or travel to another pharmacy to have their prescriptions filled without considerable hardship.

Urge your senators and representatives to support the Access to Legal Pharmaceuticals Act, ALPhA, S. 809 introduced by Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), and H.R. 1652 introduced by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and Christopher Shays (R-CT).

This important bipartisan legislation will protect an individual's right to have access to legal contraception. If a pharmacist has a personal objection to filling a legal prescription for a drug or device, the pharmacy will be required to ensure that the prescription is filled by another pharmacist employed by the pharmacy who does not have a personal objection. This includes all legal prescriptions.

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## COMING THIS FALL TO A POLLING PLACE NEAR YOU

In March, 2006, the Justice Department sued New York State for failing to overhaul its election system and replace its aging voting machines. It is the first lawsuit the federal government has filed to force a state to comply with the voting guidelines enacted by Congress after the 2000 election debacle. The legislation was called "Help America Vote Act" (HAVA).

By this November, New York State must be in compliance. The Boards of Elections (BOE), both City and State must select a new voting system. They're being pushed toward electronic voting which has many drawbacks. We've addressed the issues in previous newsletters and at several chapter meetings over the past two years. In a nutshell, we're concerned that unless the system chosen has a verifiable paper trail, cannot be manipulated by a central computerized data system, and is easy to use by all voters and poll workers, that the votes we worked so hard to win will be manipulated or discounted.

On April 25th, Councilmember Simcha Felder chaired City Council hearings on this issue. Before them were the mandate by the Federal government and 2 Council resolutions: 228 and 131. Resolution 228, called for the city and state BOEs to hold public hearings and testing before selecting a new voting system which will replace our lever based machines. Resolution 131 urges selection of the precinct based optical scanning (PBOS) system over the electronic voting system. Teresa Hommel of "WheresthePaper.org" has been at the forefront of voter concerns. She ably coached Councilmember Charles Barron to pin down the City BOE commissioner and get him to address the flaws in the wasteful procedures the BOEs are using to select a voting system. The City is better than the State on this. They're merely careless and overworked. There's a good chance that the State BOE is being unduly influenced by manufacturers of electronic voting systems to select systems that can be too easily manipulated.

BQNOW and the League of Women Voters were among civil rights and community-based groups which presented testimony in support of the above resolutions. While the BOE commissioner was given over an hour to present his testimony, everyone else was given exactly 2 minutes! (BQNOW's testimony was in writing.) The overall impression though was that our councilmembers are not fools. They saw (with Hommel's help) the flaws in the BOE's proposals and pushed hard to get them to reconsider many of their conclusions. The decision has not yet been made, but the September primaries and November election are coming soon. Will NYC be ready? Will our votes count? Stay tuned!

**ACTION:** Contact your city council representative and say that you SUPPORT passage of Resolutions 131 and 228. Urge your councilmember to support them. NOTE: David Yassky (CC33) needs to hear from you. For more information, check out <http://www.wheresthepaper.org>