PETITION TO THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

STOP CARDING FOR BIRTH CONTROL!
PUT THE MORNING-AFTER PILL OVER-THE-COUNTER

Because all women and girls should have the right to control when and if we have children, and we should have unrestricted access to all safe and effective forms of birth control;

Because the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) review of the scientific and medical evidence about the Morning-After Pill (the “MAP,” also known by brand names Plan B One-Step™ or Next Choice®) has found that the MAP is safer than aspirin, and that there is no medical reason to restrict the sale of the MAP to pharmacies or to justify other restrictions about where or how it can be sold;

Because classifying the MAP as a behind-the-counter drug blocks everyone’s access to birth control by forcing each person to show an ID to buy it. Behind-the-counter enables pharmacists to refuse to sell the MAP due to sexist attitudes, opposition to birth control, or lack of knowledge about who can buy it. Pharmacies are also not open at all times that a person may need quick access to the MAP. Unrestricted access means the MAP should be available in gas stations and grocery stores next to the condoms;

Because any female old enough to get pregnant is old enough to decide she doesn’t want to be pregnant. We will not be divided by age restrictions. All people, including those under the age of 17, must have access to the MAP without having a prescription or showing ID to prove their age;

Because all women and girls need over-the-counter access to this birth control, which is only effective when taken within 120 hours after sex;

Because on December 7, 2011, the FDA Commissioner issued a statement that “Plan B One-Step™ is safe and effective and should be approved for nonprescription use for all females of child-bearing potential,” but the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in an unprecedented move, immediately overruled the FDA’s decision; and

Because women in at least 63 other countries can get the MAP without a prescription. Why not here?

WE DEMAND that the FDA:

▪ Remove the age requirement for the Morning-After Pill,
▪ Stop carding for birth control, and
▪ Take the Morning-After Pill out from behind the pharmacy counter.

TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THIS PETITION
Please sign the petition online or email your name and address to: nwl@womensliberation.org and write “MAP Petition” in the signature line.

Get involved! Contact National Women’s Liberation:
www.womensliberation.org
nwl@womensliberation.org
phone (347) 560-4695
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National Women’s Liberation (NWL) members have been at the forefront of the grassroots fight for unrestricted access to the Morning-After Pill (the “MAP”) for all women in the United States.

Starting in January 2004, feminists in National Women’s Liberation led the Morning After-Pill Conspiracy coalition, which used creative ways – feminist Consciousness-Raising, speakouts, protests and civil disobedience – to shine a light on the injustice of the restrictions on the MAP and to show that women are the real experts when it comes to birth control.

On February 15, 2004, we began a civil disobedience campaign where 4,500 women signed a pledge promising to give a friend the MAP in defiance of the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) prescription-only requirement. In January 2005, nine of us were arrested at FDA headquarters as part of a larger protest of the FDA’s inaction. We then filed a lawsuit against the FDA (Tummino, et al. v. Hamburg), charging the agency with acting based on anti-birth control politics, not science, and failing to follow its own procedures.

In August 2006, our feminist organizing made gains: The FDA announced a compromise decision and approved Plan B for women 18 and older without a doctor’s prescription.

In March 2009, in their Tummino, et al. v. Hamburg decision, the federal court ordered the FDA to make Plan B available to 17 year olds and to review its decision to deny a “Citizen’s Petition” filed in 2001 by 60+ women’s health and rights organizations. The Citizen’s Petition asked the FDA to make the MAP available to all women and girls over-the-counter without any restrictions. In February 2012, we took the FDA back to court based on its continued failure to act on removing the unsupported restrictions on the MAP.

Why is this still an issue to feminists?

There is no medical reason to limit women and girls’ access to the Morning-After Pill, based upon the FDA’s repeated review of the scientific and medical evidence. Over 60 physicians and health organizations, including the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, agree with the FDA that the MAP should be over the counter. Women and girls in at least 63 other countries can get the MAP without a prescription. Why not here?

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