

JUDY BRUNS FEATURED IN LOCAL NEWSPAPER ABOUT NEA'S POSITION ON "REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM"

Editor's Note: The following article originally appeared in The Daily Standard (Celina OH) on Friday, July 18, 2003. It is reprinted in its entirety with permission of The Daily Standard editor. A member of Teachers Saving Children®, Judy Bruns who was interviewed for this article, is a teacher at Coldwater Exempted Village Schools and has been a delegate to the NEA RA for the past six years.

A group of area teachers are creating a stir at the state and national levels by voicing their disgust with what they feel are pro-abortion views held by the National Education Association (NEA).

The educators, who vehemently oppose abortion, say they don't want their Ohio Education Association (OEA) and NEA fees in the pockets of a devout Democratic agency that has gone on record promoting abortion.

"The teacher's union is there for the purpose of fair salaries, benefits...and improvements for our schools," said Judy Bruns, a seventh-grade language arts teacher at Coldwater schools. "But that's not what's happening. We're talking about a union of great magnitude taking stands that it shouldn't be taking and not sticking to educational issues."

A representative from the NEA in Washington, D.C., called The Daily Standard's inquiry into the matter a "non-story" and accused some of its 2.7 million members of "going outside the organization to build public pressure against the NEA."

"Nobody is forced to belong to the NEA," said Michael Pons, policy analyst for the NEA.

Although no teachers are forced to belong, The Daily Standard discovered only one of the 11 area school districts is not affiliated with the OEA/NEA – New Knoxville Local schools. Teachers at the other 10 area schools are mandated members via contract between their school's board of education and teacher associations.

Currently each teacher in the local area coughs up about \$600 annually for membership to the OEA/NEA, local officials said.

A 15-year teacher at Fort Recovery schools, Robin Armstrong of Celina is not an OEA/NEA member due to strong moral convictions, she said.

"I was a member until I learned where some of their money was going to. I'm a registered Republican and disagree with NEA's liberal views," said the chemistry/physics teacher. "How would I explain to my 'maker' someday that I let my money support things like abortion.

Armstrong is a member of Christian Educators Association and receives many of the same services from that organization as NEA provides, she said.

The conflict with OEA/NEA is intensified in Mercer County where the Right to Life chapter is larger and more active than many of the other 80 or so chapters across the state.

"I'd say Mercer County is one of the top five (chapters) in the state in terms of people who support and are active in the pro-life movement," said Denise Mackura, executive director of Ohio Right to Life.

Bruns and Fort Recovery Schools elementary guidance counselor David Kaiser attended the NEA conference in New Orleans two weeks ago as delegation representatives from the local area. The pair, along with other delegates from across the country, sought approval to change the wording of a family planning resolution adopted several years ago by the NEA.

The text of NEA resolution I-12 concerning family planning reads in part: "The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom."

Bruns, past president of the Mercer County Right to Life and affiliated with the pro-life group since the mid '70s claims the words "reproductive freedom" are used routinely by pro-abortion groups. The term was actually coined by abortion advocate and feminist Gloria Steinem, Bruns said.

Bruns' ultimate goal is to remove the entire resolution, which she and other delegates from California, Kentucky and New York find unnecessary.

Bruns, 54, of Coldwater, asked the NEA delegation in July to create a task force to "dialog" on the resolution's wording.

"The last time it was modified was 1986," Bruns said in her speech at the assembly. "Few of us would be content with textbook information that is 17 years old."

Both requests were immediately turned down by the majority of the 10,000 delegates attending the conference. And it wasn't the first time; changes to the family planning resolution have been suggested by delegates for years and voted down each time by outspoken women's caucuses, Bruns added.

She fears many teachers who feel as strongly as she does about the abortion issue are not able to attend and speak up at the conventions, which are held during the summer months – prime vacation time for educators.

"The ones who object to our changes in the resolution may not be representing the majority of the (NEA) members," she said.

Bruns said her opinion is shared by the members of organizations such as the Conservative Education Caucus, Educators for Life, Teachers Saving Children Inc., and many Christian-based groups.

Bruns said she is not encouraging teachers to leave the OEA/NEA union. On the contrary, she seeks to work from within in hopes of bringing back those members who left.

*Teachers can file specific paperwork to deter their NEA fees elsewhere and still retain protection in the union, Pons said.
(continued on next page)*

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

October 11, 2003: The Teachers Saving Children® Ohio Chapter Board of Trustees met in Coldwater, Ohio, for their regularly scheduled Fall meeting. The following are highlights of some of the items that were discussed.

1. The Board of Trustees discussed various ways of getting the word about Teachers Saving Children® out to more individuals. Each Board of Trustee member will be working on contacting teachers within their own district. In addition, each Board member will contact local universities/colleges about getting information regarding Teachers Saving Children® to future teachers.
2. The Board of Trustees approved the 2002-2003 fiscal report and the following 2003-2004 budget:

Awards & Gifts	50.00
Legal & Accounting	700.00
Office Administration	400.00
Postage	1300.00
Public Relations	
Printing	1200.00
Promotion	800.00
Telephone	100.00
Travel Expenses	<u>150.00</u>
Total	\$4700.00

OHIO TSC 2003-2004 MEMBERSHIPS

The Ohio Teachers Saving Children® Board of Trustees would like to express their thanks to everyone who has taken the time to renew. As of September 30, 2003 there are 101 paid Ohio Teachers Saving Children® members. Your continued support is greatly appreciated. If you have not yet done so, there is still time to join and still receive full membership benefits. Membership cards have been mailed.

(continued from previous page)

During the 2002-2003 school year only about 1,800 of the 131,000 Ohio members took that option, the OEA reported.

Those teachers must file as "fair share fee payers" or "religious accommodation," said Chris Lopez, general counsel for the OEA.

Fee payers are not considered members of the organization, but still pay fees in order to be represented by the union.

Those choosing to file religious accommodation voice an objection to the payment of the fee based on personal religious belief. They, too, become non-members with union benefits, and their fees are diverted to a different organization that is agreed upon by the teacher and the NEA.

Pons defended the NEA's position on abortion saying it is consistent with the majority of its members and current law. He said the NEA has in the past helped teachers on both sides

TSC OHIO CHAPTER FISCAL REPORT

2002-2003

Balance - September 1, 2002 \$2155.07

Receipts:

Contributions:

T-shirts \$(51.85)
Undesignated 445.00

Memberships:

2002-2003 805.00
2003-2004 1960.00

Interest 14.18 3172.33

Disbursements:

Awards & Gifts 50.00
National Dues

2002-2003 161.00
2003-2004 392.00

Office Administration 66.94

Postage 937.55

Public Relations 45.00

Advertising 100.00

Printing 627.09

Promotion 620.00

Telephone 4.45

Travel Expenses 65.83 \$3069.86

Balance - August 31, 2003 \$2257.54

Please note: There were a large number of membership renewals paid prior to September 1, 2003. Thank you for helping the Board to have a better picture of what our finances would be like for the 2003-2004 fiscal year. TSC does not solicit additional contributions beyond memberships, but does appreciate any additional contributions received throughout the year.

of the issue by defending women who were asked to have an abortion in order to keep their job, as well as those whose jobs were threatened if they opted for an abortion.

Bruns said in those situations the NEA's interference wouldn't be needed.

"Federal law prohibits the termination of employees for reproductive purposes," she explained.

In recent years, the NEA has been criticized for taking liberal positions on issues such as homosexual rights, capital punishment and gun control. Bruns believes it's time for the NEA to get back to the ABC's of education.

"The organization needs to get back to their original purpose of educating our youth," Bruns said.

Editor's Note: For more information, contact Teachers Saving Children® Inc. at 330-537-2546.