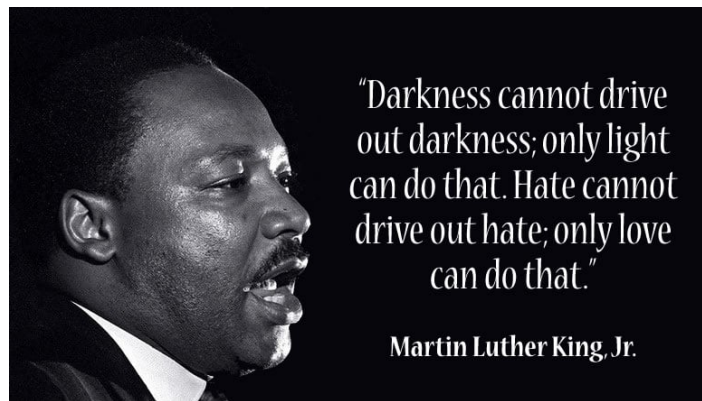




# ADVOCACY IN ACTION

ADVOCATING CHANGE = ADVANCING LIVES



## Legislation Watch - Take Action Today!

NCJWSTL is closely monitoring the following legislation this week and we are asking you to take action:

**HB 2190** - We are thrilled to announce that one of our Annual Contraception bills, which would provide an option to acquire a yearlong supply of birth control at one time, will be heard tomorrow in the **House Healthcare Reform Committee**. NCJWSTL will be there to testify in person, and we will keep you posted on the bill's progress.

**HB 1557** - This bill would establish the "Supplemental Nonprofit Safety and Security Fund." The Fund shall be used to defray the costs of security enhancements or measures for eligible nonprofits like NCJWSTL. This bill has not yet been assigned to a committee, but you can contact your legislators by **clicking here** and urge them to support HB 1557.

Now for the bad news. It's very early in the Missouri legislative session, and, already, attacks have begun on the trans community. Three bills are being heard on Wednesday in the **House Emerging Issues Committee** designed to harm transgender Missourians:

**HB 1519** - This bill would allow medical institutions to deny gender affirming care.

**HB 1520** - This bill would eliminate the "grandfather" clause and sunset provision in place for youth receiving gender-affirming care before last year's ban went into effect.



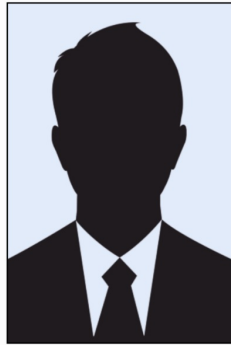
NCJW  
**ACTION**  
**ALERT**

[HB 1674](#) - This bill would prohibit use of multiple-occupancy locker rooms and restrooms by trans people.

NCJWSTL will be there to testify in person, but you can also submit testimony online by [clicking here](#). You can also [contact members](#) of the Emerging Issues Committee and urge them to vote no on these harmful bills.

To follow all of the bills that NCJWSTL is monitoring during the 2024 Missouri Legislative session, please [click here](#).

## THIS WEEK! January Lunch & Learn: Combatting Human Trafficking with FBI Special Agent Daniel Root



Thursday, January 18, 2024  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM CT

Daniel Root

**When:** Thursday, January 18 | 12:00 - 1:00 PM

**Where:** Zoom

[RSVP Here](#)

January is National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Every year since 2010, the President has dedicated the month to raise awareness about human trafficking and to educate the public about how to identify and prevent this crime. Because combatting human trafficking is one of NCJWSTL's priority issues, we dedicate each January's Lunch & Learn to educating our membership and raising awareness on this topic.

For January's Lunch & Learn, we are thrilled to welcome FBI Special Agent Daniel Root. Because he often works undercover, **we will not be showing his photo before his presentation.**

Daniel Root is assigned to the Violent Crimes Against Children/Human Trafficking task force. Prior to the FBI, Daniel worked as a linguist, high school teacher, and with a refugee resettlement agency and immigration clinic. He was a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer before joining the FBI. In his current assignment, he investigates child exploitation and trafficking crimes, as well as serving as an FBI Crisis Negotiator.

Please [click here](#) to register for the January Lunch & Learn. Questions? Email Jen Bernstein at [jbernstein@ncjwstl.org](mailto:jbernstein@ncjwstl.org) or call 314.993.5181.

## SAVE THE DATE: REPRO SHABBAT



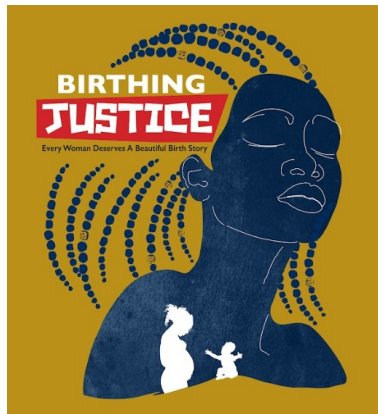
February 9-10, 2024 National Council of Jewish Women

## Reproductive freedom is a Jewish value, and we're going to celebrate it!

NCJWSTL is excited to once again partner with local synagogues for our annual Shabbat celebration that honors the Jewish value of reproductive freedom. It takes place annually on *Parshat Mishpatim*, the reading of which contains the verses commonly referenced as the foundation of Judaism's approach to reproductive health, rights and justice.

Please [click here](#) for more information. If you would like your congregation to participate, please contact Jen Bernstein at [jbernstein@ncjwstl.org](mailto:jbernstein@ncjwstl.org) and she will be happy to reach out to them.

### Birthing Justice Screening and Panel Discussion



**When:** Thursday, January 25 | 6:30 - 8:30 PM

**Where:** Temple Israel | 1 Rabbi Alvan D. Rubin Drive, St. Louis, 63141

[RSVP Here](#)

Global maternal mortality is decreasing, but the US ratio of deaths to live births has doubled since 1987. Missouri's ratio is now double the national average, and getting worse -- higher than 42 other states, and in fact eight times higher than the lowest state. And the rate for Black Missourians is three times higher than for white women.

Policies can change that trajectory. California, for example, has reduced maternal deaths by 65% over the last 15 years. Join us to learn Missouri's scope of the problem, underlying causes and potential solutions at a screening and panel discussion of the award-winning documentary, *Birthing Justice*, which tells the story of the crisis faced by Black mothers and their children and the solutions needed to transform the maternal care system.

*Birthing Justice* explores the issues fueling the maternal health crisis within the Black community and advocates for the best practices to enhance birthing equity for all women. By revealing the lived experiences of Black women and their advocates working to fix a broken system, *Birthing Justice* flips the victim-blaming narrative of this national epidemic.

Our important panel discussion will be moderated by Darcy Scharff, PhD and include Dr. Melissa Tepe, Melissa Betts-Sanders (a woman with lived experience) and Lora Gulley of Generate Health, who will issue a call to action for attendees.

*The Birthing Justice screening and panel discussion is sponsored by NCJWSTL, Generate Health, Temple Israel and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. The event is free of charge, but registration is required. Please [click here](#) to register and for more information, please [click here](#).*



### Join Us for Voting Rights Lobby Day

**When:** Tuesday, January 30 | 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Where:** Missouri State Capitol Building

[RSVP Here](#)

The deliberate attacks on Missouri voters have once again reared their ugly head in the Missouri legislature. Already this session, bills have been filed attacking the initiative petition process, absentee voting and equitable access to the polls.



Join us for the 2024 Voting Rights Lobby Day at the Missouri State Capitol! Learn about legislation impacting our democracy, meet with lawmakers and attend a committee hearing. We will come together to call on lawmakers to end attacks on Missouri's long-standing citizen initiative process and to protect election workers from harassment. Advocates from across Missouri will hear what's at stake for voting rights in Missouri, get engaged and thank lawmakers who have stood up for our freedom to vote.

Tentative Lobby Day Schedule:

- 9:00 AM - Registration Opens: Check-in/Group assignments
- 10:00 AM - Program and Group Photo - Capitol Rotunda
- 10:45 AM - Lobby Visits - Legislator offices
- 12:00 PM - Elections Committee Meeting - House Committee Meeting Room

For more information and to RSVP, please contact Jen Bernstein at [jbernstein@ncjwstl.org](mailto:jbernstein@ncjwstl.org)

## ADD YOUR NAME and Help Us Oppose Censorship of Our Public Libraries

For those who have already joined, thank you!

**To protect libraries throughout Missouri, including those at public schools, NCJWSTL has helped convene a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations called Right to Read.** The coalition will oppose any legislative, state policy or other effort to restrict access to materials at public libraries; the coalition has the utmost confidence in trained, experienced librarians and educators to evaluate and select materials in the libraries' collection.



Did you know?

- As a result of a Missouri law enacted in August 2022 restricting some types of materials in public schools, **librarians fearful of criminal prosecution have removed nearly 300 titles** from school library shelves.
- Under an administrative rule imposed by Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, all public libraries must have submitted by July 31 how they will comply with the vaguely written rule. **Failure to comply could result in loss of state funding**, which comprises a significant portion of small libraries' budgets.
- Missouri is among the nation's top book banning states, **especially regarding restricting access to books about gender, sexuality and race in public schools.**

More attempts will likely be made in the 2024 Missouri legislative session to suppress First Amendment rights. Free and open access to materials at our public libraries is an essential aspect of our democracy.

Please [click here](#) to add your name as an individual member of the coalition. For more information, please e-mail the coalition at [righttoreadcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:righttoreadcoalition@gmail.com).

## Get FREE Emergency Contraception at NCJWSTL!



NCJWSTL is thrilled to announce that we have partnered with the [Missouri Family Health Council](#) (MFHC) to distribute **FREE emergency contraception kits!** This effort is vitally important in the wake of last year's Supreme Court decision overturning Roe vs. Wade, especially in states like Missouri where abortion is illegal. Everyone should have the right to determine when and if they wish to start a family, and emergency contraception is vital in preventing unwanted pregnancies.

Also known as the morning-after pill, or by the brand name Plan B, the emergency contraception pill is an over-the-counter form of birth control that can be taken up to five days after unprotected sex to avoid pregnancy. The goal of this effort is to reduce geographic and financial barriers Missourians face in accessing emergency contraception pills.

While supplies last, MFHC, NCJWSTL and other partner organizations are offering free EC kits to anyone of any age. **Feel free to stop by the NCJWSTL office to pick up your kit - for you or a loved one.**

*If you have any questions, please contact Jen Bernstein at [jbernstein@ncjwstl.org](mailto:jbernstein@ncjwstl.org). You can also order an emergency contraception kit by mail by [clicking here](#).*

## Take Action & Join the A-List

**Now more than ever you will want to make sure that your name is on NCJWSTL's A-List for 2023!** Join us as we stand together and speak out about the issues that matter most.

*Together we can make a difference!*

A-List sponsorship ads sustain our collaborative efforts to educate the community and elected officials about issues integral to our mission, such as birth control access and voting rights. The full-page ads will run in the St. Louis Jewish Light during 2023.

- **\$18** includes your name in the ad.
- **\$54** makes you an Advocate Plus with your name in bold.
- **\$72** makes you a sponsor with your name distinguished in color

[Click here](#) to see the A-List flyer.

[Click here](#) to see the latest A-List Ad.

Join the A-list [here](#).



## Interesting Reading



This week, leaders in Congress agreed on a topline figure to fund the government for the next fiscal year. Yes, this is a positive step that we all hope will avoid another government shutdown that would be disastrous for all Americans, and particularly deadly for the millions of women living in poverty and facing hunger. But it is certainly no cause for celebration.

With rising costs, last year's funding levels are not enough for federal safety net programs to meet the needs of struggling Americans. Simply put, more people need more help and they will not get it. This is particularly true among single mothers—40 percent of whom needlessly struggle with food insecurity.

[Click here](#) to read Abby J. Liebman's article from Ms. Magazine, "The Next Battlefront in the War Against Women: Fighting for Congress to Fully Fund WIC."

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Not yet a member of NCJWSTL? [Click here](#) to become part of a growing network of courageous and compassionate individuals who improve the lives of women, children, and families every day. You don't have to be a woman or Jewish to join!

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