



ADVOCACY IN ACTION

ADVOCATING CHANGE = ADVANCING LIVES

Help Protect Missouri's Initiative Petition Process

Last week, [SJR 74](#) was passed out of the House General Laws Committee. It will now head to the House floor. **This is an egregious attack on the democratic process in hopes to stop the groundswell of support for the abortion rights petition.**

The initiative petition process is a constitutional right that Missourians have used for over 100 years. It allows Missourians from across the state the opportunity to supersede partisan politics and propose issues that matter most to our communities.

Citizen-led initiatives improve the quality of life for many people in our state and allow us to make laws that reflect the will of Missouri voters. The legislature should follow the will of the people and protect majority rule instead of attempting to grab power by limiting our ability to make decisions for ourselves.

Please [click here](#) to email your legislators and tell them to oppose any effort to dismantle the initiative petition and majority rule

PROTECT THE INITIATIVE
PETITION PROCESS

"Show Me Shenanigans" Fifth Episode Has Dropped!

NCJWSTL
National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis



Show me
SHENANIGANS

The "Show Me Shenanigans" podcast aims to demystify the legislative process in Missouri and provides action steps for anyone wanting to influence policies impacting women, children and families. Be sure and subscribe so you never miss an episode!

Listener Katie said *"The podcast was so good! Amy is an excellent host and she provided such an easily understandable introduction to the MO legislative process and the priorities of NCJWSTL. It's so reassuring and hopeful that there are smart, dedicated advocates like them working for change in our state."*

We're just over halfway through Missouri's legislative session. Tune into our next episode as NCJWSTL's advocacy team breaks down what has happened so far in session, where are NCJWSTL's priorities are in the process, what that means and they might even make some predictions for the future. Listen on Apple, Spotify or [our website](#).

We would love to hear your feedback. Please contact Jen Bernstein at jbernstein@ncjwstl.org with your comments.

Missouri LGBTQ+ Legislative Information Session With Keshet

When: Wednesday, April 10 | 1:00 PM

Where: Zoom

[RSVP Here](#)

Missouri legislators and politicians across the country have introduced bills that are aimed against the LGBTQ+ community. It can feel overwhelming to face so many bad bills, but now is the time to come together to learn about and fight against dangerous pieces of legislation. Your dedicated support can help us win this fight.



We invite you to participate in our Missouri LGBTQ Legislative Information Session. During this session, you'll learn about the bills that affect us the most, what these bills mean, and what we as LGBTQ+ Jews and allies can do to fight them. Our Jewish tradition compels us to pursue justice, and together, we can make our voices heard and advocate against those seeking to harm us.

For more information and to RSVP, please [click here](#).

Help Collect Signatures to End Missouri's Abortion Ban



Would you like to help gather signatures at other events? Our friends at AccessMO have created an extensive [sign-up](#) with some public events in the STL region through the end of April. We have collected a TON of signatures by arriving an hour before event start times, it's an easy opportunity to gather a lot of signatures in a short period of time.

You can also volunteer to gather signatures with Missourians for Constitutional (MCF) Freedom by [clicking here](#).

[Click Here to Gather Signatures with AccessMO](#)

[Click Here to Gather Signatures with MCF](#)

- **We also have petitions available to sign at the NCJWSTL office!** Stop by anytime between 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM on Wednesdays and 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM on Fridays to sign.

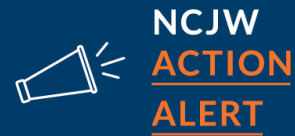
- If you are collecting signatures and need your sheets notarized, a notary is available at the NCJWSTL office on Mondays and Thursdays between 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM and Wednesdays between 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM.

We are required to collect 172,000 valid signatures by May 5th, 2024, to ensure Missourians get to vote on ending our cruel abortion ban at the ballot. **Help us do our part!**

For more information, contact Jen Bernstein at jbernstein@ncjwstl.org.

Legislation Watch - Take Action Today!

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



Bills we are advocating FOR this week:

HB 2413 - would improve Missourians' health and wellbeing and could be debated on the House floor at any time. Being referred to as a "women's health" bill, HB 2413 would treat and prevent disease, reduce unintended pregnancies and make sure survivors of sexual assault can be properly cared for at healthcare facilities. Please [click here](#) to urge your representative to vote YES on HB 2413.

HB 1999 - This bill allows school districts to include instruction on LGBTQ contributions to society. Although it has been introduced, it has not yet been assigned to a committee, but you can contact your legislators by [clicking here](#) to urge them to support HB 1999 when it's assigned to a committee.

HB 2478 - This bill prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Otherwise known as the Missouri Non-Discrimination Act (MONA), NCJWSTL and our coalition partners have been trying to pass this legislation for over 20 years. MONA has not been assigned to a committee yet, but you can contact your legislators by [clicking here](#) to urge them to support HB 2478 if and when it is.

Below are the bills we are advocating AGAINST this week:

HJR 131 - This resolution, if passed by the Missouri Legislature and approved by voters, would amend the Missouri Constitution to prohibit abortion except in case of medical emergency and would criminalize any person who violates the amendment. A constitutional amendment to enshrine the current abortion ban in our constitution is not only unnecessary, it is cruel and the process to try to pass it would be an extraordinary waste of our state's resources. NCJWSTL testified against the resolution last week. Please contact members of the House General Laws Committee by [clicking here](#)* and urge them to vote NO on HJR 131.

HB 2498 - This bill requires public libraries that are authorized to levy or collect taxes to be governed by an elected library board. It would be disastrous for public libraries because it would give the board power to select books, make personnel decisions, etc. This bill has been voted out of committee. Please contact your Missouri representative by [clicking here](#) and urge them to vote NO on HB 2498 if and when it comes to the House floor.

*When you click on this link, it will take you to a list of all House committees. Please scroll down to find the specific committee you are looking for.

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

April Lunch and Learn - Issues Impacting Seniors in our



Martha Brown



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



Nikki Mitchell

When: Thursday, April 18 | 12:00 - 1:00 PM

Where: Zoom

[RSVP Here](#)

Those entering their golden years have a lot to look forward to, and seniors today are grasping more opportunities than ever before. However, it is important that we look at the multitude of challenges that come with aging to ensure they are appropriately addressed, and the golden years remain golden. These issues become more difficult to deal with as people age, but there are ways we can help seniors through these concerns.

For our April Lunch and Learn, NCJWSTL is thrilled to welcome Martha Brown and Nikki Mitchell of Mitchell, Brown & Associates. Ms. Brown began her career working in Probate matters, including Guardianship cases. As she built her practice, she began working with Medicare and Medicaid matters. By 1994, she had an Elder Law practice, although at the time, she didn't realize what it was! Ms. Mitchell works in all areas of elder law for the firm. She is committed to helping clients in need and guiding them through difficult legal processes with compassion.

While the list of potential concerns facing seniors is endless and can often be daunting in nature, ensuring that this population is well-supported can significantly ease these apprehensions. Ms. Brown and Ms. Mitchell are the perfect speakers to help us tackle these issues.

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

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.

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. 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



Domestic workers perform grueling work with few protections. They provide care in isolated settings, leaving their essential labor all too often hidden. It can be a difficult job and a complicated one. When you work in a home, lines blur.

For decades, feminist activists have said that work in the home—often performed for no pay by wives, mothers, and daughters—has been misunderstood as separate from “real” labor. This feminized care has been relegated

and detached from a labor movement focused on men.

[Click here](#) to read Chloe Aftel's article from the Mother Jones, "The Invisible Work of America's Domestic Workers."

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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Transform Our Community**



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