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Pro-abortion group abandons Clinton

NARAL endorsement goes to Barack Obama

[[Obama051808.jpg]]A national pro-abortion group has endorsed Illinois Sen. Barack Obama over rival New York Sen. Hillary Clinton in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination.

The group, NARAL Pro-Choice America, announced its political action committee's endorsement on May 14 and has posted it on its web site. The group has supported Clinton throughout her career.

"Pro-choice Americans have been fortunate to have two strong pro-choice candidates in Senator Obama and Senator Clinton, both of whom have inspired millions of new voters to participate in this historic presidential race," NARAL president Nancy Keenan said in a statement. "Today, we are proud to put our organization's grass-roots and political support behind the pro-choice candidate whom we believe will secure the Democratic nomination and advance to the general election. That candidate is Senator Obama."

In addition to its support for legalized abortion, NARAL often opposes conscience-protection laws for pharmacists and emergency room doctors who object to dispensing so-called "Plan B" emergency contraception on the grounds it could endanger a newly conceived child.

In a dispute over one such law in Wisconsin, Madison Bishop Robert C. Morlino accused NARAL and its allies of being "more interested in promoting a state-supported, contraceptive ideology than they are in simply, reasonably, protecting women."

"I am disappointed because of the work that I've done for so many years," said Clinton in an interview on NBC Nightly News in response to NARAL's endorsement of Obama. "I'm proud to have the support of, you know, many other groups that share my views and my commitment to issues. But we're going forward."

The NARAL endorsement has divided abortion proponents. Ellen Malcolm, president of Emily's List, an organization that promotes female pro-abortion candidates, criticized the endorsement. "I think it is tremendously disrespectful to Senator Clinton, who held up the nomination of an FDA commissioner in order to force approval of Plan B, and who spoke so eloquently during the Supreme Court nomination about the importance of protecting Roe v. Wade, to not give her the courtesy to finish the final three weeks of the primary process," said Malcolm in a statement. "It certainly must be disconcerting for elected leaders who stand up for reproductive rights and expect the choice community will stand with them."

Both Obama and Clinton hold similar positions on abortion. In a July 2007 speech to the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, Obama pledged that he would not yield to pro-life concerns. When he held office in the state legislature, he opposed a state law that would have protected newborns who survived failed abortions. The Illinois senator has also opposed any restrictions on the practice of partial-birth abortion.

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