

Pledge to Give Your Friend the Morning-After Pill

BACKGROUND:

Thousands of women across the country regularly break the law by giving friends the Morning-After Pill (MAP)** when they need it. Why is helping our friends illegal? Because this safe after-sex birth control is still available by prescription only. This is especially outrageous considering that women in more than 38 other countries can get MAP without a prescription.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had the power to change all this. But on May 6, 2004, President Bush's right-wing appointees to the FDA – then Commissioner Lester Crawford and Director Steven Galson— announced that they were refusing over-the-counter status for the Morning-After Pill. These men cited concerns that access to MAP would increase 'promiscuity' among young women, but have ignored studies showing that teens with easy access to MAP have unprotected sex at the same rate as those without access. **Under the guise of concern for young women, the FDA has denied all women access to MAP, and has towed the anti-birth control line of President Bush and other extremists.**

There is no medical reason to refuse over-the-counter status for the MAP. The FDA's own Advisory Committees overwhelmingly recommended that MAP be available without a prescription (23 to 4), as did more than 70 national medical organizations.

Recently, the makers of *Plan B* (a brand of Morning-After Pill) were forced to cave into pressure from the FDA to put an age restriction on MAP access. The company's current proposal suggests that MAP be prescription-only for women under 16, thereby making it necessary for pharmacists to card *all* women in order to get MAP. **We object to this age restriction - any woman old enough to get pregnant is old enough to decide that she doesn't want to be pregnant!**

Furthermore, **NO woman should be forced to present an ID to get birth control!** This approach is sexist, condescending, and puts our rights in the hands of pharmacists. Pharmacists for Life and other anti-woman movements already refuse to fill women's prescriptions for regular birth control. Some pharmacies (i.e. Wal-Mart) don't stock MAP at all. **Reproductive choices belong in women's hands— not in the hands of pharmacists, doctors, or politicians.**

The right to control when and if we have children is central to directing our lives, and **all** women should have **all** the reproductive tools easily available to them. We will continue our civil disobedience until the Morning-After Pill is available to *all* women over-the-counter!

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE ACTION:

Women all over the country are already breaking the law to evade an unjust law. Now we are proudly going public with our actions to make clear that we will continue to increase women's access to the Morning-After Pill, illegally if necessary.

We commit to give a friend the Morning-After Pill any day she needs it.

In addition to pledging to give other women the Morning-After Pill, we the undersigned say to the FDA: Take away the unfair barriers that drive up the cost and block timely access to MAP! Free up our access to the Morning-After Pill by making it an over-the-counter medication for all women— and stop making us criminals!

**The Morning-After Pill (MAP) is a safe, effective form of birth control that can be taken up to 120 hours after sex to prevent pregnancy. It's most effective within the first 24 hours after sex. (It is NOT the same as RU-486, the so-called "French Abortion Pill." If you are already pregnant, MAP will not affect your pregnancy.)

