

Canvassing: Pro-Choice, Pro-Access, Pro-Education

Sat, 04/27/2019 - 00:00

|

Kameron newcomb@tulane.edu

[View PDF](#)



Hi everyone! My name is Kameron and for the past two semesters I've been working with the New Orleans Abortion Fund (NOAF) on various canvassing efforts in the greater New Orleans community. Last fall I worked on a Get Out The Vote campaign, and this semester I've been hard at work tailoring our canvassing to the legislative session.

The legislative session occurs once a year in our state capitol, Baton Rouge. All of our state policymakers come together and decide on the state budget and how to address important issues facing Louisiana. From the standpoint of a nonprofit working to expand reproductive rights, these sessions make me uneasy. The legislation from the past decade has been littered with anti-choice bills. In fact, the admitting privileges law facing the Supreme Court (the one that could determine the future of *Roe v. Wade*) was proposed at the Louisiana legislative session in 2014.

After months of wondering what bills would be proposed, the main one NOAF is working against is HB 425, a constitutional amendment. This amendment would ensure no one finds the right to abortion or funding for abortion in the Louisiana constitution. The representative behind this bill, Katrina Jackson (D-Monroe), is the same lawmaker who wrote the admitting privileges law mentioned above.

After unearthing the contents of this bill, I got to work. With the help of my wonderful supervisor Steffani, I've reached out to various university and community groups, co-sponsored a volunteering event helping women and girls in our city, set dates for community canvassing, and created various fliers to inform the public about this bill. After some debate, we decided that a petition is a quick, tangible way for regular people to get involved. After street canvassing twice we found the public response to be overwhelmingly positive. Almost every person I spoke to agreed with the notion of bodily autonomy and a woman's right to choose.

It's no secret Louisiana is the most anti-choice state in the union; our lawmakers are actively trying to make it so. It's a frustrating divide when everyone you talk to believes one thing, but your policymakers believe another. This is why it's so important to engage with and listen to others in our own community. Education is a huge step in the right direction, and sometimes it takes an intern in a vulva costume to start that conversation.