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Wisconsin Right To Life

Heather Weinger
Legislative Director
Email: hweinger@wrtl.org
Phone: 877-855-5007

Barbara Lyons
Executive Director
Email: blyons@wrtl.org
Phone: 877-855-5007

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Wisconsin Right to Life Executive Director to Retire at Year's End

Heather Weinger Named as Successor

After dedicating 40 years to Wisconsin Right to Life, Executive Director Barbara Lyons will retire at the end of 2014. Her strong leadership has made Wisconsin Right to Life the premier right-to-life organization in the country.

Barbara began as a volunteer where she served as President of the Milwaukee County chapter for three years. She joined the staff in 1977, serving as Legislative Director for 10 years and was promoted to Executive Director in 1987 where she has led Wisconsin Right to Life for 27 years.

“Barbara has been a true leader for Wisconsin Right to Life, but more importantly she has served as an outstanding steward for protecting human life,” shared Michelle Farrow, President of the Wisconsin Right to Life Board of Directors. “Her dedication, compassion and commitment to the cause will be greatly missed. But, we knew we couldn’t keep her forever. We wish her only the best as she enters the next chapter of her life.”

During Barbara’s tenure, Wisconsin has seen abortion numbers drop by over 73 percent since its peak number in 1980. Pro-life attitudes of Wisconsin adults have reached as high as 67% who believe abortion should not be legal except in the most extreme circumstances. And, Barbara has

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been a national leader in education and strategy to combat doctor-prescribed suicide and euthanasia.

There have been numerous pieces of legislation passed under Barbara's direction as well, including: conscience protection for medical professionals; prohibiting the use of state taxpayer dollars to pay for abortions; requiring the reporting of abortions; parental consent prior to a minor girl's abortion; giving women seeking abortions full information with a 24 hour reflection period; prohibiting partial-birth abortions; adding to the homicide code a crime for those who harm or kill an unborn child in a non-abortion context; protection of unborn children who might be at risk because of the mother's use of drugs or alcohol; safe haven laws for newborn babies; streamlining adoption laws; protecting infants born alive following an abortion; umbilical cord collection of adult stem cells for future use; Wisconsin opt-out of abortion coverage under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; prohibiting web cam abortions; protecting women from coerced abortions; and requiring a woman to view an ultrasound of her unborn child 24 hours before an abortion can be performed.

Wisconsin Right to Life is also recognized as a national leader in efforts to preserve the right of free speech under the First Amendment, winning numbers of court challenges including a major win before the U.S. Supreme Court in 2007.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to serve a great organization dedicated to eradicating the greatest human rights abuse of our time," stated Lyons. "Knowing that there are individuals who are alive because of our work is an immeasurable reward for the many years dedicated to the cause of life."

After a nationwide search, the Wisconsin Right to Life Board of Directors chose Heather Weininger to lead Wisconsin Right to Life into a great and challenging future. Heather, who currently serves as Legislative Director, will become Executive Director effective July 1. Barbara will

continue as Executive Director Emerita until the end of 2014

“I am honored to be chosen as the next Executive Director of Wisconsin Right to Life,” stated Weininger. “Barbara has built a strong foundation which will allow for our continued success for many years to come. I am grateful to be able to call her a mentor and a friend.”

Media Contact: Michelle Farrow 414 778-5780

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