

Top: Hundreds of anti-abortion marchers file past a handful of abortion-rights demonstrators at the Nebraska Union Saturday.

Middle: Kim Tubbs of Alabama debates abortion with Walk For Life participant Mike Wooten, who brought a wooden cross on the march, in front of the Nebraska Union Saturday.

Bottom: Kim Owen of Oxford marches in the Walk For Life through downtown Lincoln Saturday.



Michelle Paulman/DN

Lobby

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Coalition member Virginia Walsh said strong support of LB790 was needed to counterattack the Supreme Court's most recent abortion-related decision — a ruling that said women seeking abortions are not entitled to federal protection under a 19th century civil rights law enacted to protect African Americans.

The decision, Walsh said, put restrictions on abortion clinics seeking federal protection from protesters who harass patients and block clinic entrances.

LB790 balances the right to a lawful protest and the right of women and men to secure access to a medical facility, Walsh said. She called upon all Nebraskans to "reject terrorist tactics of the fringe elements of the anti-abortion movement" by enacting LB790 promptly.

Walk

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"A lot of people are pro-life, a lot are pro-choice, and there are many who don't know what they are," she said. "The majority of people don't have a specific stand, because they don't know that much about it."

After the rally, Cara Catlett, president of UNL Students For Life, said she felt the majority of students on campus were opposed to abortion except in the case of rape and incest.

Catlett, a junior political science major, spoke to anti-abortion demonstrators in the Centennial Ballroom in the Nebraska Union.

Abortion-rights activists held a counter demonstration as anti-abortion supporters entered the Nebraska Union.

Julie Lostroh, walk organizer, called the clash "pathetic." She said the number of people opposing abortion far outweighed the number chanting for abortion rights, but abortion-rights protesters tried to overcome their smaller numbers by using graphic and vivid signs.

The walk was held in 30-degree windy conditions. Makimaa told supporters to not to focus on the cold.

"Your faces are cold, your hands are freezing, and my feet are aching," she said. "I want you to think about the ache of those women's hearts who have been broken by abortion."

"I used to hate that the anniversary (Roe vs. Wade) was in the winter, but now I realize that I can remember that and use it to push me forward," she said.



Michelle Paulman/DN



Travis Heying/DN

Activists clash at union steps

By Kathryn Borman
Staff Reporter

About 25 abortion-rights protesters responded to Saturday's 20th annual Walk For Life with signs, chants and a last-minute protest on the front steps of the Nebraska Union.

Anti-abortion marchers shouted back at the protesters as they passed. Tensions mounted, and several face-to-face confrontations occurred.

Protesters chanted, "Our bodies, our lives, our right to decide," and "Hey, hey, ho, ho, Roe vs. Wade ain't gonna go," as anti-abortion marchers worked their way up the union steps to the ballroom.

Abortion-rights protesters chanted, "Women have the choice," while anti-abortion marchers broke away from the march and shouted back, "Babies have the choice."

An anti-abortion marcher ran up to a group of abortion-rights protesters and shouted, "You don't have a choice."

Kristine Futa, a graduate student in clinical psychology, held a sign that read "Keep your laws off my body."

Futa said the hostile reactions on both sides were the result of adrenaline.

"People get so emotional," Futa said. "This is not what I was expecting."

Futa said the protest reaffirmed her belief that the abortion issue was a matter of choice, because there was

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— Schrick
UNL student

no one right answer.

"I'm a little nervous, frankly," she said. "I don't like being screamed at."

Kim Schrick, a part-time student in the Division of Continuing Studies, said she found the confrontations dis-comforting.

Schrick said the time had come for people on both sides of the issue to work together to find a solution.

"If this much time and energy on both sides was put into finding a solution . . . it would do a lot more good," she said.

Suzanne Rogers-Lipsey, president of the Lincoln chapter of the National Organization for Women, also was surprised by the fierceness of the confrontation.

"I didn't expect the intense reactions on both sides," she said.

Rogers-Lipsey said the protest was designed to be a display of passive opposition to the march.

"Our purpose wasn't to seek conflict, but just to make our presence known," she said. "We want to let

students know there is another choice ready to take them in."

Rogers-Lipsey said the march was effective despite the relatively small number of abortion-rights protesters.

"With our energy, we were able to do what we wanted to do," she said.

Karen Hindhede, a graduate student in English, said she took part in the protest because she was for the freedom to choose regarding pregnancy and reproductive options for women.

"And to me, pro-choice is not pro-abortion," she said.

"People I've talked to who are pro-life are so black and white," she said. "They don't allow for specific situations."

Bob Schafer, a 1992 UNL graduate and NOW member, said he attended the protest because he also was in favor of a woman's right to have an abortion.

"I think more men should be involved in feminist issues," Schafer said. "I think it's a human issue."