



National Advocates  
for Pregnant Women

N A P W

## **National Advocates for Pregnant Women Seeks Plaintiffs to Challenge Alabama Law Used to Arrest and Prosecute Pregnant Women**

**September 30, 2014**

Since 2006, more than 130 Alabama women who became pregnant and tested positive for a controlled substance have been arrested under the theory that a pregnant woman's uterus is a dangerous "environment" no different from a methamphetamine lab. They were arrested under Alabama's "chemical endangerment of a child" law (Alabama Code § 26-15-3.2d), which makes it illegal to expose a child to "an environment in which controlled substances are produced or distributed." In 2013, the Alabama Supreme Court upheld the application of this law to pregnant women.



So far, state authorities have targeted women who have used illegal drugs during pregnancy. But the law makes no distinction between legal and illegal drugs. This law places *all* pregnant women at risk if they have used controlled substances during pregnancy, including pregnant women who have a valid prescription for medication they need to protect their health or for pain relief during labor. NAPW seeks to defend the rights of pregnant women by bringing constitutional challenges to the misapplication of this law.

Has this law affected you or your family? Are you currently pregnant and needing medication, or planning to have an epidural during childbirth? We would like to hear from you. If you would like to share your experience, or would like more information, please contact Sara Ainsworth, Director of Legal Advocacy, at (212) 255-9252 or by email at [sla@advocatesforpregnantwomen.org](mailto:sla@advocatesforpregnantwomen.org).

We are seeking plaintiffs who want to participate in a lawsuit. Your call is confidential, and if we provide legal services to you, our services are free. If you have been charged with a crime, we would be happy to talk with you, but we cannot defend you in your criminal case. We are a not-for-profit organization. Our goal is to vindicate the constitutional, civil, and human rights of pregnant women. To learn more about our work, visit [www.advocatesforpregnantwomen.org](http://www.advocatesforpregnantwomen.org).

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[www.advocatesforpregnantwomen.org](http://www.advocatesforpregnantwomen.org)