

# LOCAL NEWS

## Boca businessmen offer financing for indigents to avoid abortions

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BOCA RATON — Fourteen businessmen vowed Thursday to offer indigent pregnant women in Boca Raton a choice: If they reject abortion, the men would help pay the cost of raising children for 18 years.

Details of the program have not been worked out. But spokesmen for the coalition, called "Fourteen Men and a Baby," said women should have the financial freedom to give birth.

The group — whose name is a takeoff on the popular movie, *Three Men and a Baby* — announced the offer at a press conference promoting a Jan. 23 pro-life rally at Sanborn Square.

One pro-choice advocate called the proposal an example of men trying to control women's bodies. Another said the group will have no trouble finding candidates.

Shirley Mirow, executive director of

Planned Parenthood of Boca Raton, said there are 92 women in the organization's prenatal program. "They'd love to take advantage of the offer," she said.

Mirow said prenatal care and hospital delivery can cost \$5,000 or more. Raising a child can cost several thousand dollars a year, Planned Parenthood officials say.

The Fourteen Men said they didn't know how they would make their proposal work, but they promised to do their best.

"My family is prepared to pay medical expenses, give financial support, groceries," said organizer Bert Oliver, a Boca Raton attorney.

Women applying for aid will be screened by the Women's Pregnancy Center, a Christian-oriented, anti-abortion referral service in Boca Raton, said Tom Trento, a coalition

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member.

Not all the men in the group are wealthy, Oliver said. But they'll donate to the best of their abilities, he said.

The men are helping the Christian Action Council of Boca Raton organize the pro-life rally. Women who thought about having abortions and chose not to will talk about how happy they are with their decisions, they said.

The rally marks the Jan. 22, 1973, Supreme Court decision, *Roe vs. Wade*, that gives women the right to have abortions.

"I am outraged that men can once again think they can control

women's bodies," said Anne Gannon, South County National Organization for Women president, when told the businessmen's promise. "What's the quality of life they're pledging? Abortion is not an easy decision, and their rhetoric doesn't make it easier."

Oliver said he already has supported a woman through her pregnancy. But she moved back with her parents, he said, and no longer needed help.

Other members of the coalition are Arthur Ally, a stockbroker; Anthony Barbar, a developer; Edgar Barnhill III, an attorney; William Mitchell Jr., a real estate agent and Neil Van Hoogen, a magazine publisher.