



Kurt Ellison

About 65 people gathered outside the County Governmental Center yesterday.

Abortion-rights rally protests court decision

"Outrageous," "discrimination" and "black day" were among the terms used at a Santa Cruz rally yesterday to protest the U.S. Supreme Court's decision upholding restrictions on abortions for girls under 18.

"I'm outraged that a band of men has told us what to do with our bodies and what to do with our lives," Shannon Sullivan of the Santa Cruz Chapter of the National Organization for Women told the gathering of 65 people on the

steps of the county courthouse.

County supervisors Gary Patton and Sherry Mehl and Santa Cruz Mayor Mardi Wormhoudt spoke at the half-hour rally, held after the county building had closed for the day.

"A very vulnerable group (pregnant teenagers) has been made more vulnerable," said Mehl, urging people to be committed to pro-choice.

Patton had stronger words, calling the decisions "a betrayal of the principles on

which this country was founded."

The rally was organized by Liz Taylor-Selling of NOW after the Supreme Court's ruling yesterday morning. The court upheld laws in Ohio and Minnesota that require parental notification before a girl under 18 gets an abortion, as long as there is a legal mechanism to "bypass" the parental consent by getting a judge's approval instead.

Ira Lubell, the county's health officer, said many poor

girls might be unaware of the bypass system. He also said it's important for those getting abortions to do so early in the pregnancy.

"A healthy abortion is an early abortion," he said.

Laura Brezel, a teenager, said most young women contemplating abortions will talk to their parents. The court decisions, she said, are discrimination against those who aren't in a position to consult their parents.

—Lane Wallace