



Planned Parenthood®

Monday *MONITOR*

Monday, April 14, 2008

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HCS FOR HB1831 & 1472 ON HOUSE CALENDAR

A substitute for **HB1831**—The Abortion Restriction Act of 2008—was put on the House Perfection Calendar last Thursday with a time limit of 2.5 hours debate. The bill, sponsored by congressional candidate Representative Bob Onder (R-Lake St. Louis) was amended in committee to remove some of the more outrageous elements of the “coercion” sections. However, the bill remains a huge intrusion into the doctor-patient relationship and continues to add burdensome requirements and restrictions that are not necessary for reasons of health or safety. In addition, the bill requires abortion providers to tell women seeking an abortion that if they choose parenting or adoption instead of abortion that ‘public and private agencies’ abound across the state to provide them with medical and social services, job assistance, housing, transportation, clothing, food, and other services. Missouri has already cut services and health coverage and is looking at more cuts to programs in the budget it is debating. It is disingenuous at best—and flat-out state-sanctioned misinformation at worst—to make false promises to women at a time when they face a very difficult decision for them and their families.

STATUS OF BILLS RELATING TO CHOICE BY ACTIONS TAKEN

Anti-choice, Anti-prevention bills:

- **SB 1058/HB1831&1472**—Abortion Restriction Bill of 2008 [*on calendar in respective chambers*]
- **HB 1472/HB1520**—State Mandated Delays, Misinformation & Intrusion [*HB1472 amended to HB1831*]
- **HB 1339**—Discrimination Against Abortion Providers [*referred to House Rules Committee*]
- **HB 1922/HB1984**—Big Brother Bills; Doctors to Ask Women Why They Get Abortions & Report That To The state [*both bills voted out of House committee*]
- **HB 1316**—Parental Consent for Birth Control and Health Care Decisions [*heard in House committee*]
- **HB 1625**—Pharmacy Denial [*heard in House committee*]
- **HB 2527**—Anti-choice License Plates [*referred to House committee*]
- **SB 766/SB1219/HB1530/HB1795**—Prison Time for Pregnant Addicts and Alcoholics [*heard or referred to committee in respective chamber of origin*]

Bills that promote prevention programs:

- **SB 778**—Cervical Cancer Immunization [*passed by Senate, waiting for House committee referral*]
- **HB 1504**—Expedited Partner Therapy [*reported out of House Rules Committee*]
- **SB 1215/HB 2272**—Prevention First Act [*referred to committee in respective chambers*]
- **SB 780**—Comprehensive Sex Education [*referred to Senate committee*]
- **SB 948/HB1720**—Patient Protection at Pharmacies [*referred to committee in respective chambers*]
- **HCR 12**—Prevention First Resolution [*referred to House committee*]

ANOTHER PLANNED PARENTHOOD DAY OF ACTION THIS WEEK!

Watch for a couple dozen Planned Parenthood choice advocates and supporters from across the state to converge on the Capitol on Wednesday to visit with legislators and talk about PREVENTION. They will also visit with key elected officials to explain why adding further burdensome restrictions to the safe, legal abortion procedure will not reduce unintended pregnancy, nor will it reduce abortions. The effect of these restrictive bills—which are clearly and openly intended by their sponsors to make it harder for women and providers—is to push women further into their pregnancy, when the risk is higher, or push them out of state for services. And, while the House may take up **The Abortion Restriction Act of 2008** this week, the **PREVENTION FIRST ACT OF 2008** languishes; it has not even been given a hearing in either chamber! If the legislative leadership were serious about reducing abortion in Missouri, they would focus on reducing unintended pregnancy through comprehensive sex education and improved access to contraception.

MORE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR FROM ACROSS THE STATE

TEEN SHOWS INTELLIGENCE

I read the local paper as often as time and work travel allows. I've been tempted many times to reply to things I've read in the "Your Voices" section, but just never took the time. But this morning, I read something that inspired me to reply, and made me feel good about the upcoming generation. The letter "Abstinence-based education at fault," March 31, was written by Katherine Anne Frederick, a self-described member of the teen demographic. She wrote about the nonsense that is abstinence-only sex education. She states, rightly so, that real sex education should focus on health and responsibility in a comprehensive way. She couldn't be more correct! Abstinence-only sex education is a whimsical concept that makes no sense to anyone that ever took a biology class or remembers being a teenager. Abstinence-only sex education is fundamentally flawed, as is most of the political platform that supports such an obvious folly. I'm delighted that a teenage girl is able to look at reality over politics or religious dogma, and then state a logical position that makes sense to anyone capable of independent thinking. I hope she's representative of the kind of thinking the upcoming generation is going to bring to our political and social debates. In one short letter, Ms. Frederick demonstrates an understanding and intellect that escapes many of today's elected officials.

Mike Massey, Springfield, Springfield News Leader, 4.07.08

LIKE GIVING UP DRIVING

Abstinence from sex is 100 percent successful in preventing sexually transmitted diseases the same way that abstinence from driving automobiles would be 100 percent effective in preventing traffic accidents. Teens are no more going to give up sex than anyone else is going to give up driving. The only way to determine the effectiveness of safe sex is to find out how many girls and boys infected with sexually transmitted diseases actually practiced safe sex. I'd bet the number is low. It's low because people of the "sex is bad" persuasion attempt to keep safe sex from being taught to our young. When is this country, like the rest of the world, going to face the fact that people, young and old, like sex and treat it accordingly?

Bill Herbert, High Ridge, St. Louis Post Dispatch, 4.07.08

PEOPLE WHO PUSH ABSTINENCE-ONLY SEX-ED MISUNDERSTAND SAFE SEX AND PEOPLE

Ms. Smith ("Safe Sex" is a failure) seems to misunderstand a few things about the relation between safer sex and abstinence. Abstinence is only effective so long as one abstains; safer sex is still important and necessary unless one plans to remain celibate his or her entire life. A recent 10 year long study, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., has shown that teens who were enrolled in strictly Abstinence Only programs not only did not necessarily remain abstinent, but also didn't believe birth control methods worked and were ignorant of how to use them properly. This is the true problem at hand. In order to truly protect teens from disease and unwanted pregnancy, we need a comprehensive sex education program that stresses the effectiveness of both abstinence AND birth control methods. We don't keep our children safe from the dangers of traffic by enforcing ignorance, we teach them to be careful and look both ways if they must cross the street. How are we protecting our teens by keeping them ignorant of sex (a prospect much more tempting than running in front of a car, as well as a biological impulse) and how to protect themselves? Teens have always made their own decisions, regardless of what parents or schools are telling them. It is crucial that we provide them with the information to make these decisions wisely.

Heather Gibson, Columbia, St. Louis Post Dispatch, 4.07.08

DUBIOUS CLAIMS

A recent letter dubiously asserted that comprehensive sex education encourages risky behavior by telling teens, "Have sex, just use a condom." I know of no such program in our schools. What comprehensive sex-ed does say is that condoms aren't 100 percent effective against pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. At least it helps to give some measure of protection to those who choose to be sexually active, which is one-third to one-half of high-schoolers. The letter cited the journal Adolescent and Family Health, which purports to be involved in "scientific peer-reviewed studies," but which shows a clear bias toward study outcomes that promote abstinence. The letter made the outrageous claim that Planned Parenthood "knowingly and fraudulently promotes unsafe sex." That's like the NRA saying that the Brady Campaign promotes unsafe gun use.

Rich Brown, Lemay, St. Louis Post Dispatch, 4.07.08