



Reproductive Health Bills – 2008 *Final Summary*

While 14 restrictive bills were filed this session, none passed. However, most of them at least got a hearing and several got floor debate time while the Prevention First Act—promoting education and services that are proven to reduce unintended pregnancy and thus the number of abortions—did not even get a hearing.

BILLS THAT RESTRICT ACCESS TO PROGRAMS OR SERVICES

ABORTION RESTRICTION BILL OF 2008

[SB 1058](#) Senator Mayer

[HB1831](#) Representative Onder

These long, checklist bills contained numerous new, burdensome and duplicative requirements for counseling, evaluating, and performing abortion procedures. In addition, the bills created the new felony crime of “coercing an abortion” and removed decision-making entirely from the woman seeking the procedure.

STATE MANDATED DELAYS, MISINFORMATION & INTRUSION

[HB 1472](#) Representative Cunningham

[HB 1520](#) Representative Hodges

These bills required women, in addition to the informed consent discussion, to have an ultrasound performed at least 24 hours in advance of an abortion. It has been Planned Parenthood standard medical practice for years to perform an ultrasound before every abortion procedure, whether medical or surgical, and the woman is provided the opportunity to view the ultrasound prior to the procedure; her response is noted in the medical record. HB 1520, however, also required the doctor to tell the woman there is a link between abortion and breast cancer—a statement that has been discredited by every credible cancer organization in the country, including the American Cancer Association.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

[HB 1922](#) Representative Harris (110)

[HB 1984](#) Therese Sander

These bills required abortion providers to report to the state information that is already being reported. In addition, however, they would have required providers to ask women—and report to the state—the reasons why they are seeking an abortion.

PRISON TIME FOR PREGNANT ADDICTS AND ALCOHOLICS

[SB 766](#) Senator Goodman

[HB1530](#) Representative Smith

[SB 1219](#) Senator Brad Lager

[HB 1795](#) Representative Pollock

These bills would have punished a pregnant woman with up to 15 years in prison if she went to term before she was able to overcome her drug or alcohol problem. These bills contradicted current statute (passed in 1991) that, rather than imposing criminal sanctions, requires pregnant women with drug or alcohol problems be given priority access to treatment and prenatal care to increase the chances of a healthy birth. Studies have demonstrated that, even while continuing prenatal substance use, obtaining prenatal care reduces the risk of premature birth and increases health outcomes. A jail cell does not.

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR BIRTH CONTROL & ALL HEALTH CARE DECISIONS

[HB 1316](#) Representative Davis

This bill asserted the “natural fundamental right of parents and legal guardians to make all health care decisions for a minor”. Among other things, this would require parental consent for birth control and other family planning services. Studies show that teens will engage in sexual activity without protection if forced to get parental permission for birth control.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ABORTION PROVIDERS

[HB 1339](#) Representative Muschany

This bill excluded health care providers that perform abortions from normal and customary civil liability protections.

PHARMACY DENIAL

[HB 1625](#) Representative Emery

This bill would have protected pharmacies from recrimination if employees of the pharmacy refused to dispense contraception. HB 1625 also incorrectly defined emergency contraception as an abortifacient even though it was approved by the FDA as a contraceptive. It would have allowed a pharmacist to refuse to dispense ‘RU486’ – even though this medication is not available through a pharmacy, but only under direct contract between the manufacturer and the abortion provider.

ANTI-CHOICE LICENSE PLATE

[HB 2527](#) Representative Therese Sander

This bill would have allowed for a “Choose Life” special license plate, and established the Choose Life Commission

BILLS THAT PROMOTE PREVENTION AND WELLNESS

PREVENTION FIRST ACT

[SB 1215](#) Senator Bray

[HB 2272](#) Representative Wright-Jones

The provisions of the 2008 Missouri Prevention First Act are programs, policies, and services that reduce unintended pregnancy and the need for abortion. The bill included:

- **Comprehensive Sex Education.** *Repealed the restrictive provisions around sex education passed last year in HB 1055. This would once again allow trained sex education professionals to be invited into public schools and would require voluntary sex education courses to include information on both abstinence and the benefits of contraception.*

- **Compassionate Assistance for Rape Emergencies.** Ensured that victims of sexual assault who present at an emergency room are provided with information about, and access to emergency birth control such as Plan B. Plan B is approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a contraceptive; if the pregnancy is already established, the medication does not work.
- **Birth Control Protection.** Prohibited any government interference in a woman's access to FDA approved contraceptive drugs and devices in Missouri.
- **Women's Health Services.** Restored the highly successful, general revenue funded program that served 30,000 low income women annually with well woman services. Every \$1 spent on prevention programs saves the state \$3 in pregnancy related medical costs.
- **Patient Protection.** Required pharmacies to make sure all legal prescriptions or lawful requests for approved over-the-counter birth control and emergency birth control are dispensed in a timely manner and without undue hardship to the patient.

CERVICAL CANCER IMMUNIZATION

[SB 778](#) Senator Justus

This bill mandated that MO-DHSS send information to the parents or guardians of all females entering the 6th grade about the connection between HPV and cervical cancer and the availability of the HPV vaccine. The bill did not require the vaccine for admission to school. This bill did require health insurance companies to provide coverage for HPV immunizations for females between the ages of 11 and 21—the FDA recommended group most in need.

COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION

[SB 780](#) Senator Smith

This bill repealed the restrictive provisions around sex education passed last year in HB 1055. This bill would have once again allowed trained sex education professionals to be invited into public schools and would have required voluntary sex education courses to include information on both abstinence and the benefits of contraception.

PATIENT PROTECTION AT PHARMACIES

[SB 948](#) Senator Justus

[HB 1720](#) Representative Talboy

This bill sought to clarify the duty of pharmacies to fill all lawful prescriptions and to make sure that persons of legal age purchasing emergency contraception over-the-counter are served as they would be for any other OTC medicine.

EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY

[HB 1504](#) Representative Head Walton

This bill would have allowed a 'licensed physician' to treat the partner of a patient diagnosed with Chlamydia or Gonorrhea without an 'intervening medical evaluation or professional prevention counseling.' The antibiotics would be dispensed in pill form. This policy would be limited to health districts with high case rates for the STIs.