



Monday *MONITOR*

February 19, 2007

Contact: Michelle Trupiano – 573.424.8717 (cell)

ABSTINENCE-ONLY/SEX MIS-EDUCATION BILL HEARD IN HOUSE COMMITTEE

HB716 (Davis) was heard Wednesday in the House Special Committee on Family Services. In fact, it was the only bill heard that day, and the sponsor of the bill was grilled for almost an hour on details of the bill. Despite the narrowing of the federal guidelines to ensure ‘abstinence only’ means NO balanced discussion of contraception, the sponsor continues to insist schools can choose to teach it. According to the guidelines <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/HHS-2006-ACF-ACYF-AE-0099.html> all programs must have as their “exclusive purpose” the promotion of abstinence outside of marriage for people of any age and ***may not in any way advocate contraceptive use or discuss contraceptive methods except to emphasize their failure rates.***

SECOND CERVICAL CANCER IMMUNIZATION BILL FILED

Sen. Jolie Justus (D-10) has filed **SB 514**, a companion to HB 802. The Senate bill, however, goes one step further and requires health insurance plans to cover the vaccine for females ages 11-21. The vaccine protects against two of the most virulent strains of human papilloma virus (HPV) that cause more than 70% of cervical cancers.

SENATE JUDICIARY SET TO HEAR GOVERNOR’S RESTRICTIVE HEALTH AGENDA

On Monday night, the Senate Judiciary Committee will hear five bills concerning reproductive health, including two of Governor Blunt’s three ‘priority’ bills. The third bill, sponsored by Sen. Crowell, was pulled from the list Friday night. It would protect individuals involved in dispensing medications – from the pharmacist to the cashier – from any accountability if they refuse to fill birth control prescriptions. **SB 432**, the companion to HB716 Abstinence Only/Sex Mis-Education bill (see above) and **SB375** Alternatives-to-Abortion-That-Prohibit-Family-Planning Program will be heard. Despite the Governor’s talk about ‘prevention and wellness’, he continues to promote programs and policies that do NOTHING to reduce unintended pregnancies – and oppose proven prevention programs like family planning and comprehensive sex education.

Though the Pharmacy Denial bill will not be heard, Sen. Justus’ bill that would ensure women receive their medications without discrimination or delay, will be heard. **SB72**, the Conscientious Pharmacist Act, which places the burden for filling prescriptions squarely on the back of the pharmacy – not the woman – is common sense public policy. In January of this year, a married woman in Perryville, Missouri, was refused her prescription for routine birth control at the only pharmacy available.

Prior to the hearing, individuals from across the state who would be negatively impacted by these policies will present their stories to the media in the Bingham Gallery.

The committee will also hear two bills that aim at increasing political interference in medical procedures and unfairly and unnecessarily burdening providers. The bills are **SB370** (Scott) and **SB196** (Gross) respectively.

FINAL CALLS TO PUT PREVENTION FIRST:

If you have not yet signed on to the 2007 Missouri Prevention First Act, please contact the sponsors’ offices and give them your name. House: Wright Jones ext 6800. Senate: Bray ext 2514.

CONDOM EDUCATION IS AN ESSENTIAL TOOL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS

Educating youth about condoms does not promote sexual activity. Research clearly indicates that education about condoms does not lead to increased rates of sexual initiation, lower the age of sexual initiation, or increase sexual activity among young people. Furthermore, studies show that consistent and correct condom use can greatly reduce the risk of HIV transmission among sexually active youth. For all these reasons, mainstream medical organizations—like the American Academy of Pediatrics, Society for Adolescent Medicine, and American Medical Association—strongly support providing youth with information about and access to condoms, including making condoms available in high schools.

Research indicates that young people who are educated about the health benefits of condoms are more likely than other young people to use condoms when they eventually initiate sex. Teens whose parents talk with them before they are sexually active about the importance of using condoms are also more likely to use condoms at first intercourse. Additionally, research shows that young people who use condoms at first intercourse are more than twice as likely to use condoms thereafter compared to peers who did not use condoms at first intercourse. Finally, research shows that youth who feel comfortable in talking with a partner about condoms are also more likely to use condoms compared to youth whose discomfort keeps them from talking about condoms with their partner.

NATIONAL CONDOM WEEK, FEBRUARY 14 – 21

THRONGS PAY TRIBUTE TO HARRIET WOODS, HER LEGACY

Jo Mannies. St. Louis Post Dispatch Sunday, February 18 2007 (excerpts)

Hundreds of former Lt. Gov. Harriett Woods' political allies, relatives and friends gathered Saturday morning at Powell Hall to celebrate her life and lament her death. The two-hour memorial service offered up a mix of the personal and the political legacy of Woods, 79, who died Feb. 8 from leukemia.

Amid selections of her beloved classical music, a parade of public figures and family members took to the stage to compare Woods' public image as a champion of women in politics, with her private passion for opera, tennis and sweatshirts worn inside-out. "Each time a woman is elected to office, or appointed to a board or commission, her legacy will be fulfilled," said state Sen. Rita Days, D-Bel-Nor, who holds Woods' old state Senate seat. Meanwhile, St. Louis Symphony concertmaster David Halen played a touching solo on Woods' own violin, a talent that many in the audience weren't aware that she had.

But arguably the most powerful testimonial to Woods' achievements came from a no-show at Saturday's service: Sen. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo. The senator's mother, Betty Ann McCaskill, read an emotional address that the senator had planned to deliver herself until Senate leaders decided to stay in session Saturday in Washington to consider a nonbinding resolution that objects to President George W. Bush's plan to increase the number of American troops in Iraq. McCaskill — Missouri's first woman elected to the U.S. Senate — wrote that she recognized that performing her duty was the best way to honor Woods. When she casts her vote against Bush's plan, McCaskill added, "then I will quietly say, 'Thank you, Harriett.'"

"It was so fitting that Claire could not be here because she was exercising that power that Harriett so wanted us to use, in the right way," said state Rep. Margaret Donnelly, D-Richmond Heights.

Earlier, Missouri Secretary of State Robin Carnahan told the crowd that Woods deserved accolades because she was "one of those few who actually bent history." Carnahan recounted Woods' key behind-the-scenes role after the plane crash on Oct. 16, 2000, that killed Robin Carnahan's father — then-Gov. Mel Carnahan— as he campaigned for the U.S. Senate. Also killed were the governor's son, Randy Carnahan, and aide Chris Sifford. Robin Carnahan said Woods had persuaded the family to carry on the late governor's campaign and had encouraged his widow, Jean Carnahan, to publicly agree to be appointed to the Senate in his place. Jean Carnahan became the first woman from Missouri to serve in the Senate.

Granddaughters Lela and Reina Woods read their grandmother's own account of their family's immigrant past, then tied it to her dream for the future: "The day when electing a woman or hiring a woman drew no special attention."