



Monday *MONITOR*

February 5, 2007

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COMMITTEES FINALLY APPOINTED IN HOUSE

Fortunately for women's reproductive health, several legislative champions were appointed to committees in the House that are already scheduled to, or will likely, hear legislation of concern to reproductive health advocates, specifically:

Rules: Connie Johnson (D-61), Mike Talbot (D-37)

Family Services: Shalonn Curls (D-41), Beth Low (D-39), Jeanette Mott Oxford (D-59)

Health Care Policy: Judy Baker (D-25), Craig Bland (D-43), Sam Komo (D-90)

Judiciary: Connie Johnson (D-61)

Crime Prevention: Bruce Darrough (D-75), Jamilah Nasheed (D-60)

BILL THAT WOULD JAIL PREGNANT WOMEN HAS HEARING ON TUESDAY

HB92 (Rep. Darrell Pollock, R-146) reverses sound public health policy passed in 1991 that treats the use of drugs or alcohol during pregnancy as a medical issue, and instead would subject women to criminal prosecution. In certain instances, it could result in up to 15 years in prison. Referral information provided by doctors and social workers seeking treatment and prenatal care for such women could be used in those prosecutions. The ***American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, American Nurses Association, American Society of Addiction Medicine, March of Dimes, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, American Psychiatric Association***, and many other medical groups oppose prosecution and punishment of pregnant women. HB92 will be heard in Crime Prevention and Public Safety on Tuesday at noon in House Hearing Room 6.

DAVIS FILES SECOND ABSTINENCE ONLY, SEX MIS-EDUCATION BILL

On Thursday, Rep. Cynthia Davis (R-19) filed **HB716**. While leaving out the more incendiary language, this bill is every bit as dangerous and misleading as her original bill, HB63. HB716 (just like HB63) would require sex education in public and charter schools to comply with the federal 'Abstinence Only' program funding guidelines – regardless of whether a school district receives such funds. These guidelines, tied to the almost \$1.1 billion spent on such programs, have required the use of curricula that:

- ☞ Contain false information about the effectiveness of contraceptives*
- ☞ Contain false information about the risks of abortion*
- ☞ Blur religion and science*
- ☞ Treat stereotypes about girls and boys as scientific fact*
- ☞ Contain scientific errors*

* from *Report on Federally Funded Abstinence Only Education Programs requested by U.S. Rep. Henry Waxman, Dec 2004*

ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION COMPANION BILL FILED IN HOUSE

Rep. Belinda Harris (D-110) filed **HB691**, identical to SB375. This bill also specifically prohibits funds from being used for family planning – *the very best “alternative” to abortion.*

NEW SOUTH DAKOTA ABORTION BAN BILL FILED

Anti-choice legislators in South Dakota won't be kept down by the will of the people. Last week, a new bill was filed to ban abortion in the state, this time with limited exceptions for rape, incest, or the woman's health. In cases of rape and incest, police reports and DNA evidence would be mandatory. State Rep. Gordon Howie (R) said the rape and incest provisions would be strict to ensure women were not pretending to be victims just to get an abortion. In cases of health exceptions, two doctors from different practices would have to concur that continuing the pregnancy would result in "devastating and irreversible injury" to the woman.

RAPE SURVIVOR JAILED FOR 2 DAYS & DENIED 2nd EC DOSE

Last week, a 21-year old college student in Tampa, Florida was raped as she returned to her car after attending a local parade. She managed to escape and reported the attack to local police. As she was being interviewed, police discovered she had an outstanding four-year-old warrant for failing to pay a fine related to an incident when she was a juvenile. Just hours after being raped, the young woman was handcuffed and hauled off to jail. Adding insult to injury, a jail worker prevented her from taking the required second dose of EC for more than 24 hours longer than recommended. The jail worker has since been put on administrative leave.

FEB 13th NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION: PREVENTION FIRST = HEALTHY FAMILIES

Across the nation on February 13th, Planned Parenthood supporters will be Putting Prevention First in news conferences, lobby days, rallies, and by filing legislation that promotes prevention programs. The federal **Prevention First Act** introduced in the 110th Congress by Senator Harry Reid (D-NV) and Representative Louise Slaughter (D-NY) is an omnibus family planning initiative that expands access to preventive health care services and education programs to help reduce unintended pregnancy, prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and support healthy families by improving women's health — all while saving scarce public health dollars.

In Missouri, Rep. Robin Wright-Jones (D-63) and Sen. Joan Bray (D-24) are seeking co-sponsors for the **Missouri Prevention First Act**, which will be filed that day. Similar to HR and S21, this common sense Missouri legislation will increase access to contraception and comprehensive sex education. Legislators should contact the sponsors' offices to sign on.

YOU WILL BE MISSED, MOLLY IVINS

The irreplaceable Molly Ivins, writer and activist, passed away last week from breast cancer. Molly was a lifelong advocate for women's rights, reproductive rights, and Planned Parenthood. She was an outspoken critic of politicians who meddle in the health care decisions of women and families, and will be sorely missed.

HOLD THE DATE: Prevention First National Day of Action – Tuesday, February 13
HOLD THE DATE: MO Women's Health Advocacy Day – Tuesday, April 17