



Monday *MONITOR*

Tuesday, January 22, 2008

Contact: Michelle Trupiano – 573.424.8717 (cell)

TODAY MARKS THE 35th ANNIVERSARY OF ROE V. WADE

Thirty-five years ago today, the US Supreme Court affirmed the right of women to decide when or whether to have children. Today, the abortion rate has declined to its lowest level since 1974, the year after the Roe decision (see over). Help us recognize this historic day at one of the following events this week and next:

St. Louis: Tuesday, January 22, 6:00—9:00pm, Third Degree Glass Factory, 5200 Delmar. **Fired Up For Choice!** Veteran poet **Shirley Bradley Leflore**; fire jugglers; choice cheerleaders; postcard contest; refreshments; cash bar. Contact Angie at 314.531.7526 ext 334 or angie.postal@ppls.org

Springfield: Tuesday, January 22, 7:00pm at Millie's turn-of-the-century café, 313 S Jefferson. **Celebrations of Women, Freedom and Choice** will be presented by a collaborative theater group. Appetizers served; cash bar. Contact Kellie at 417.883.5899 or kellie.rohrbaugh@pprm.org

Kirksville: Tuesday, January 22, 7:00pm, SUB Down Under on the TSU Campus. **"Parrying Attacks on Reproductive Rights & Care,"** panel discussion featuring speakers from Vox, NEMO NOW, TRPP and Medical Students for Choice. Contact: Lisa at 573.364.1509 or trpp@fidnet.com

Columbia: Conclude a week of activities on Friday, January 25, 6:00—9:00pm, The Blue Note, 17 N 9th Street. Mingle with food and friends, listen to local bands, and **Stand Up for Choice!** Contact: Kristen at 573.443.0427 ext 241 or Kristen.walle@ppkm.org

Kansas City: Tuesday, January 29, 6:00—9:00pm at Unity Temple on the Plaza. **Chili For Choice**—a night of spoken word poetry, music and chili. Contact Victoria at 913-312-5100 ext 257 or victoria.pickering@ppkm.org

PHARMACY DENIAL BILL RE-FILED

Similar to the bill last year, Rep. Emery (R-126) has filed a bill—**HB1625**—that would protect pharmacies that refuse to dispense abortifacients. The bill falsely describes "emergency contraception such as the Plan B drug" as an abortifacient and also falsely suggests that "the RU486 drug" is available through a pharmacy.

EXCITING, PRO-ACTIVE PREVENTION BILLS

HB1504, filed by Rep. Walton (D-81) offers a pro-active public health approach to treating sexually transmitted infections (STIs). This bill would allow 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 and the law would be limited to health districts with high case rates for the STIs. The bill has been referred to the House Health Care Policy Committee.

SB948, filed by Sen. Justus (D-10), seeks 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.

SB766 AND HB1316 HEARD IN COMMITTEE

SB766—Prison Time for Pregnant Addicts—was heard on Tuesday. This bill ignores the good public health policy already in statute that gives pregnant women first priority access to substance abuse treatment and encourages them to seek care without fear of prosecution.

HB1316—Parental Consent for all Healthcare Decisions—was heard Thursday. This bill would create serious negative consequences for child health by 'superseding all other state laws'. Despite intense scrutiny, the bill sponsor was unable to articulate what problem needed to be 'fixed' by this bill and seemed unaware of the impact it would have on child health if enacted.

SAVE THE DATE: LOBBY FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH & LIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008—Jefferson City

ABORTIONS IN U.S. DROP TO LOWEST LEVEL SINCE 1976

By Rob Stein WASHINGTON POST Thursday, Jan. 17 2008

WASHINGTON — The number of abortions performed in the United States dropped to 1.2 million in 2005 — the lowest level since 1976, according to a new report.

The number of abortions fell at least in part because the proportion of women ending their pregnancies with an abortion dropped 9 percent between 2000 and 2005, hitting the lowest level since 1975, according to a nationwide survey.

The fall came despite a continued decline in the number of abortion providers. It slipped 2 percent since the last survey, but that drop was much smaller than in previous years.

The report itself did not identify reasons for the drop in abortions; researchers said it could be due to a combination of factors.

"It could be more women using contraception and not having as many unintended pregnancies. It could be more restrictions on abortions making it more difficult for women to obtain abortion services. It could be a combination of these and other dynamics," said Rachel Jones of the Guttmacher Institute, a reproductive-health research organization, which published the report in the March issue of the journal *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*.

The trend was welcomed by both abortion opponents and abortion rights advocates.

"This study shows that prevention works, and that's what we provide in our health centers every day," said Cecile Richard of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. "At the end of the day, Americans of all stripes believe that we need to do more to prevent unintended pregnancy and make health care affordable and accessible."

"It's still a massive number, but it's moving in the right direction," said Randall K. O'Bannon of the National Right to Life Committee, adding that at least some of the drop may be due to changing attitudes.

"Even look at Hollywood," said O'Bannon, citing the hit movie "Juno," about a pregnant teenager who decides to have her baby. "More and more people are starting to reconsider their positions."

Suzanne Poppema of Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health speculated that wider availability of the morning-after pill also might be playing a role. The emergency contraceptive known as Plan B, a high dose of standard birth control pills, can prevent pregnancy if taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex.

The report was based on a survey, conducted regularly since the 1970s, of all abortion providers known to the Guttmacher Institute. It is considered one of the most authoritative sources of data on abortions in the United States. The latest survey, of 1,787 providers, was conducted in 2005 and was the first since 2000.

The total number of abortions among women ages 15-44 declined from 1.3 million in 2000 to 1.2 million in 2005, an 8 percent drop that continued a trend that began in 1990, when the number of abortions peaked at more than 1.6 million, the survey reports. The last time the number of abortions was that low was 1976, when slightly fewer than 1.2 million abortions were performed.