



# Monday *MONITOR*

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## **SPEAKER JETTON CLAIMS TO HAVE ‘MADE ABORTION RARE’ IN MISSOURI**

In his opening remarks on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, House Speaker Rod Jetton (R-156) grandiosely stated that, under his watch, Missouri has achieved President Bill Clinton’s goal of making abortion ‘rare.’ Not only is that not the case, he conveniently neglected to say ‘**safe, legal, and rare,**’ Clinton’s true and responsible goal. And, we know the best way to accomplish this is through access to comprehensive sex education and family planning services, two areas the Speaker opposes. Jetton also claimed in the past two years to have ‘reduced the number of abortions’ in Missouri. Abortions have been going down consistently each year since 1980, not due to the role of the Missouri legislature, but due to better access to new and improved methods of birth control <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/VitalStatistics/MVS05/GraphD.pdf>. Two additional points of clarification:

- ☛ the Jetton legislature did not pass parental consent for minors; that passed in 1979
- ☛ there have never been ‘10 abortion clinics’ in Missouri; the quoted study referenced ‘locations’ that could include hospitals, clinics, doctors offices or individual physicians.

In actuality, decreasing providers and creating delays (such as the 24-hour mandatory delay) does not decrease abortions; it does make them harder to obtain and can lead to abortions being performed later in pregnancy, when it is less safe for women.

We do applaud Speaker Jetton’s prediction that next year there ‘will be fewer abortions performed...than any year since 1975’ (see vital stats info above). At Planned Parenthood, we are working hard to make sure women can access birth control and that teens get honest, accurate information regarding contraception and abstinence so they do not find themselves unintentionally pregnant.

## **BRAY-LAMPE PREVENTION RESOLUTION**

As a precursor to the **2007 Prevention First Act** – which we invite all legislators to co-sponsor – **SCR1** and **HCR4** were filed. This resolution will put the General Assembly on record supporting increased access to education and prevention services that can make abortion rare in Missouri. Safely. Legally. Here’s the call:

**Whereas**, truthful information is key to making responsible decisions; and

**Whereas**, contraception – which helps space childbirths, reduce unintended pregnancies, and improve maternal and child health outcomes – is basic women’s healthcare; and

**Whereas** the most effective way to prevent unintended pregnancy is to improve access to safe, affordable, effective contraceptive methods and to provide medically accurate information about how to use such methods;

**Whereas**, support for information and services that increase health and wellness makes common sense;

**Therefore**, the Missouri legislature shall:

1. Help women, regardless of income, avoid unintended pregnancy through access to affordable, FDA-approved contraception, including emergency contraception
2. Support programs and policies that make it easier for women to obtain FDA-approved contraceptives
3. Ensure all public school students receive age appropriate, reproductive and sexual health education that includes the latest medically factual information regarding the health benefits and possible side effects of all forms of contraception, as well as the success and failure rates for prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

## **HEALTH CARE FACTS – NOT KEROACK!**

As health care providers, we are gravely concerned over the recent appointment of anti-birth control, anti-sex education activist Eric Keroack as the new deputy assistant secretary for population affairs (DASPA). We fear that this represents yet another example of the Bush administration choosing ideology over sound science and good medicine. We call on Congress to strengthen its commitment to fully funded, comprehensive family planning programs and hold hearings early in 2007 to address unmet health care needs.

In his new position, Keroack will oversee Title X, the nation's family planning program, which provides high-quality family planning and preventive health care services to more than five million individuals annually. Title X helps low-income women plan healthy families by ensuring their access to birth control and vital services like screenings for cancer and sexually transmitted infections.

Despite the documented success of family planning as a key component of preventive health care, this administration's attitude toward the Title X program has been one of benign neglect, leaving it extremely underfunded and ill-equipped to continue providing the high-quality services that have been the program's hallmark for more than 35 years. Every day we see the impact of this lack of funding — nearly 17 million women are in need of subsidized family planning services and providers are often unable to supply the most effective contraceptives, screening, and vaccines available.

As reproductive health care professionals, we are concerned about the impact that Eric Keroack may have on this health care crisis. We know firsthand the value of preventive care, including comprehensive sex education and access to birth control. Congressional hearings will also provide a long-overdue opportunity to identify what is needed to strengthen the program such that it can address these disparities and fulfill our common goals of helping women avoid unintended pregnancies.

We call on Congress to strengthen its commitment to fully funded, comprehensive family planning programs and hold hearings early in 2007 to address this national health care crisis.

We encourage providers to sign on to this petition at: [www.ppaction.org/campaign/keroackprovider](http://www.ppaction.org/campaign/keroackprovider)

## **PPFA LAUNCHES 'HEALTH CARE FACTS, NOT KEROACK' AD CAMPAIGN**

In paid print and online advertisements, PPFA is demanding that Keroack be replaced by a qualified health care professional to oversee Title X. In addition, PPFA has outlined priorities for the 110th Congress that focus on promoting commonsense health care policies like the protection and funding of Title X, expanded access to prevention services through Medicaid, and protecting teens through medically accurate sex education. The January 4, 2007, edition of *Roll Call* included PPFA's print advertisement, and online ads are running on [www.thehill.com](http://www.thehill.com) and blogs including [www.dailykos.com](http://www.dailykos.com), [www.thecarpetbaggerreport.com](http://www.thecarpetbaggerreport.com), [www.pandagon.net](http://www.pandagon.net) and [www.feministing.com](http://www.feministing.com).

Prior to his appointment by the Bush administration, Eric Keroack was the medical director of A Woman's Concern (AWC), a network of so-called "crisis pregnancy centers" in the greater Boston area. Under Keroack's supervision, AWC health centers would not distribute birth control, encourage its use, or offer referrals for contraceptive drugs and devices.

For more information about Eric Keroack, visit [www.plannedparenthood.org/keroack](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/keroack).

## **ROE V. WADE: 34<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS ACROSS THE STATE**

**St. Louis:** Thursday, January 18, 7:00—9:00pm. 'How the Pro-Choice Movement Saved America' author Cristina Page will keynote at Mad Art in Soulard. Call 314.531.7526 ext.334 for information and tickets.

**Springfield:** Monday, January 22, 7:00pm. 'The Education of Shelby Knox' movie at The Moxie Cinema, 408 W Walnut, Springfield. For information and tickets, call 417.882.4668.

**Columbia:** Monday, January 22, 2007, 7:00pm. Movie TBA at Jessie Wrench Auditorium in Memorial Union South on the campus of University of Missouri in Columbia. Call 573-443-0427 ext 241 for more information.

**Kansas City:** Tuesday, January 23, 5:30-7:00pm. 'Trust Women: Looking Back and Moving Forward.' Californos Restaurant, 4124 Pennsylvania, Kansas City, MO

### **Statewide Website**

[www.ppmissouri.org](http://www.ppmissouri.org)

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