



Monday *MONITOR*

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BUSY, BUSY WEEK IN JEFFERSON CITY...BUT MOSTLY ON THE WRONG PRIORITIES

ABORTION RESTRICTION BILLS MOVING IN HOUSE & SENATE

SB 264, the **Abortion Restriction Bill** sponsored by **Sen. Rob Mayer** (R-Dexter) was heard in Senate Judiciary Committee Monday evening. In a surprising move, the anti-abortion lobbyists—who are in the Capitol most days—chose to offer testimony before their guest witnesses; unfortunately they ran out the clock leaving time for only one of their witnesses. She testified, as she had in the House hearing, about an abortion she had undergone more than 20 years ago that she now regrets. Sens. Bartle and Cunningham peppered the Planned Parenthood lobbyist with questions regarding current policies and procedures, materials, and referrals. Regrettably, both Senators have ignored invitations over the years to visit the health centers so they may learn firsthand about the rigorous practices that abortion providers follow.

Meanwhile, in the House, **Rep. Cynthia Davis'** version of the bill—**HB46 & 434**—was approved by House Rules Committee on Tuesday evening and immediately placed on the House calendar—an unusually rushed move that would allow it to be heard on the House floor on Thursday. Ultimately, it was not brought up, but could be heard as early as this evening.

SENATE ANTI-FOCA RESOLUTION HEARD IN RULES

SCR 11, the **Anti-FOCA Resolution** sponsored by **Sen. Matt Bartle** (R-Lee's Summit) was heard in the Senate Rules committee on Tuesday afternoon. During the course of the hearing, Sen. Bray inquired of Sen. Bartle why he was not willing to focus time and energy on the types of preventive services that could help women not face the decision whether to terminate. Sen. Bartle was passionate in his response that he "can't waste time on prevention" when he could be stopping women from getting abortions. The resolution was approved by a 3 to 1 vote (Engler, Nodler, Shields 'yea'; Bray 'no'), with Sen. Green voting 'present'.

PHARMACY DENIAL BILL HEARD IN HOUSE HEALTHCARE POLICY COMMITTEE

HB 226, the **Pharmacy Denial Bill** sponsored by **Rep. Ed Emery** (R-Lamar) was heard in House Health Care Policy committee on Wednesday afternoon. Rather than protecting patients who are denied medication at the pharmacy counter, this bill would protect pharmacies from blame if their employees pick and choose what they will dispense. HB 226 incorrectly defines emergency contraception as an abortion agent even though it was approved by the FDA as a contraceptive that will not terminate an established pregnancy. It would allow 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.

BUT, GOOD NEWS: CERVICAL CANCER IMMUNIZATION BILL PERFECTED IN SENATE!

The one bright spot—and right priority—this week was the Senate's perfection, without discussion, of **SB104**, the **Cervical Cancer Immunization Bill** sponsored by **Senator Jolie Justus** (D-Kansas City)! SB104 requires MO-DHSS to send information to the parents or guardians of all females entering the 6th grade about the connection between human papilloma virus (HPV) and cervical cancer, and the availability of the HPV vaccine. This bill does not require the vaccine for admission to school. HPV has affected humans for thousands of years and today is one of the most common sexually transmitted infections in the U.S. The HPV vaccine protects against HPV types 16 and 18 that cause 7 out of 10 cases of cervical cancer which is why—as a matter of public health—the CDC recommends that all girls 11 to 12 years old receive the HPV vaccine.

And, the bill was perfected on Sen. Justus' birthday. Happy birthday, Senator!

PRESIDENT'S 2010 BUDGET OVERVIEW INCLUDES MEDICAID FAMILY PLANNING EXPANSION

By Emily Douglas. Created Feb 26 2009 - 12:05pm. <http://www.rhrealitycheck.org>

President Obama's 2010 "Budget Overview Document" is out, and there's "great news" in it for reproductive health advocates, says Tait Sye of Planned Parenthood. While the overview is generally non-specific, it does make clear that the Medicaid family planning expansion—which would extend Medicaid coverage for family planning services to non-pregnant women—is included (see page 127). The expansion, which would enable states to extend coverage to non-pregnant women without first seeking a waiver from the federal government, was first included in the economic stimulus package. When widely decried by Republicans, it was quickly abandoned by President Obama, who asked congressional Democrats to drop the provision. *[Monday Monitor note: as of December, MO has this coverage for non-pregnant women up to 185% FPL]*

"The inclusion of a provision to expand eligibility for Medicaid funded family planning services is a tremendous step forward in meeting the need for access to family planning services. Federal funding for family planning is a common sense, common ground solution that enables people to act responsibly, stay healthy and plan for strong families," Mary Jane Gallagher, president of the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association, said in a statement. Gallagher also called for the budget to fund Title X at \$700 million.

The overview is promising on a number of other sexual and reproductive health priorities, including committing to "fund[ing] models that stress the importance of abstinence while providing medically accurate and age-appropriate information to youth who have become sexually active." But the outline does not reveal whether funding for abstinence-only programming will be eliminated. "We are cautiously optimistic about the language in the President's overview," says Jen Heitel Yakush, Assistant Director for Public Policy at SIECUS. "We are concerned that youth who may become sexually active are not included in the language but we do believe that this language reflects an end to funding for ineffective abstinence-only-until-marriage programs." The 2009 budget cuts funding for the Community-Based Abstinence Education program by \$14 million, but sex ed advocates hope for a total zeroing-out of all abstinence-only funding streams in the 2010 budget.

Advocates expect the budget itself to be released in April.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD APPLAUDS RESCINDING OF BUSH HHS MIDNIGHT RULE [excerpts]

February 27, 2009: Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) applauds the Obama administration for taking the first step in rescinding a midnight regulation that undermines the country's fragile health care system as well as patients' access to health care information and services.

"Today's action by the Obama administration demonstrates that this president is not going to stand by and let women's health be placed in jeopardy [...] said PPFA President Cecile Richards. "Our priority is ensuring that the millions of patients we see every year receive complete and accurate health information and services [...] In these difficult economic times [...] it is critical that we work to increase, not limit, access to health care. When a patient walks into a hospital, pharmacy, or any health care center she should be confident she will receive complete and accurate health care information and services."

When the Bush administration proposed the Rule, roughly 200,000 U.S. citizens, federal and state elected officials, medical organizations, and health care advocacy and religious organizations submitted comments opposing the misguided rule, including

- a bipartisan coalition of more than 100 members of Congress
 - a bipartisan group of governors, including Governors John Baldacci (D-ME), Chet Culver (D-IA), Jim Doyle (D-WI), Christine Gregoire (D-WA), David Paterson (D-NY), M. Jodi Rell (R-CT), Edward Rendell (D-PA), and Ted Strickland (D-OH)
 - a bipartisan group of attorneys general, including those from Arizona, California, Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, and Vermont
 - state legislators from a number of states, including Oregon, Texas, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin
- [...] In addition, the legal counsel and two commissioners from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) also submitted comments, explaining that the rule creates unnecessary confusion for the nearly 600,000 health care facilities it reaches.

By allowing health insurance companies, hospitals, doctors, physicians, and health care workers of all kinds to deny patients vital health care information and services, without the patient even knowing, the rule undermines health care access and creates chaos in an already stressed health care system, particularly for low-income women and families whose options are already limited.

For complete release, go to: <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/newsroom/press-releases/planned-parenthood-applauds-rescinding-bush-hhs-midnight-rule-23897.htm>