



Monday *MONITOR*

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BREAKING NEWS – BREAKING NEWS – BREAKING NEWS... GOV. BLUNT YANKS CANCER SCREENING FUNDS FROM PLANNED PARENTHOOD

In a stunning demonstration of politics over prevention, Governor Matt Blunt announced on Monday (3/19) that he was breaking a 15-year contract with Planned Parenthood in Southwest Missouri for Breast and Cervical Cancer screening services. This program – funded through the Federal Centers for Disease Control but administered through the state Health Department – has allowed 1500 low-income women in the past five years alone to choose preventive screenings at clinics in Springfield and Joplin. His reason? *“Women should not have to go to an ‘abortion provider’ for life-saving services.”* The biggest problem with this statement? The clinics do not provide abortions – which he belatedly has had to acknowledge! This despicable political move to appease his anti-abortion base was accompanied by a promise to add \$500,000 to the program. But it is a half-million dollar ‘promise’ that must still go through the appropriations process – and, if approved, will still not be available until next fiscal year. Meanwhile, the women of southwest Missouri will have nowhere to go for breast and cervical cancer screenings. *For another opinion on this, read the editorial in the Governor’s hometown newspaper, the Springfield News-Leader on this back of this issue.*

HB412 – PHARMACY DENIAL – VOTE ‘DO PASS’ IN COMMITTEE

HB412 (Emery) was voted ‘Do Pass’ out of Rules Committee on Thursday before spring break and is now 35th on the House Perfection Calendar. Despite discussion and concern regarding language and references to ‘contraception’, the bill still contains language defining emergency birth control as an abortifacient and would allow pharmacies to refuse to fill legal prescriptions. Pharmacists do not dispense medication abortion, and should not deny women contraception. House members should vote “NO” on this thinly veiled disguise to make basic contraception harder to obtain.

SCS SB 370, 375 & 432 – OMNIBUS ABORTION BILL – PLACED ON INFORMAL CALENDAR

In the wake of the lengthy MOHELA filibuster, **SCS 370, 375 & 432** (Scott R-28) was rolled over onto the Senate Informal Perfection Calendar. It can now be brought to the floor at any time for debate and amendment. This dangerous bill – which does nothing to help prevent unintended pregnancies – seeks to ban information on contraception from public schools, remove local control from school districts regarding guest speakers and information, places in statute the Governor’s ‘Alternatives to Abortion’ program that expressly forbids family planning, and will close 2 of the 3 remaining abortion facilities in Missouri. Senators are strongly urged to vote “NO” on this bill.

FIRST THINGS FIRST: MAKE HEALTHCARE A PRIORITY IN MISSOURI – SB 581 HEARING

Dozens of witnesses spoke in favor of **SB581** (Shoemyer D-18) at the Senate Committee hearing on March 13th and nobody spoke in opposition. This bill would prompt expansion of quality, affordable healthcare by prioritizing a restoration of Medicaid coverage and services to the hundreds of thousands of Missourians who were cut in 2005. It proposes a “Missouri solution” to the state healthcare crisis through meaningful public input and research on best practices to address the plight of 700,000 uninsured Missourians.

Springfield News Leader: Editorial, March 21, 2007

Blunt lashes out at wrong organization

By Pulling Health Contract from Planned Parenthood, Governor Punishes Women.

Gov. Matt Blunt is either woefully uninformed about his own community or he's willing to lie if it ingratiates himself with those who share his political views. That's what the governor demonstrated Monday at Jordan Valley Community Health Center, where he announced he'll seek \$500,000 in additional funding for free breast and cervical cancer exams for women.

The additional funding is a great idea.

But in making that positive announcement, he also took the opportunity to disparage a local women's health provider — Planned Parenthood — and deceive Missourians about the sorts of services provided there.

Not content to increase women's access to important exams by adding locations where they are provided, Blunt is unilaterally canceling a state contract with Planned Parenthood to provide the same exams he touts as important to women's health.

"Patients should not have to go to an abortion clinic to access life-saving tests," Blunt said.

The statement is patently false.

The Planned Parenthood clinics in Springfield and Joplin do not perform abortions, nor have they ever, and for the governor to make that false allegation is outrageous, regardless of what one personally thinks about the organization's goals and political leanings.

Blunt's spokeswoman later backtracked and indicated that because some Planned Parenthood clinics conduct abortions, and because the organization lobbies for abortion rights legislation, all of its clinics are known "philosophically" as abortion providers.

That comment is just as offensive to the more than 1,500 women who have accessed the state-funded free breast and cervical cancer exams at Springfield and Joplin Planned Parenthood clinics in the past five years. The fact is that Planned Parenthood clinics provide the very sort of "wellness and prevention" care that the governor claims to support, and the women who access services there know that fact perfectly well. In fact, the Springfield Planned Parenthood Clinic has been a part of the state program to provide free cancer screenings for 15 years. And now, with no notice or even the courtesy of a phone call, the governor is canceling that relationship for nothing more than perceived political gain.

"This is about women having their opportunity taken away from them," says Planned Parenthood of Southwest Missouri spokeswoman Kellie Rohrbaugh.

In refusing to separate politics from the act of governing, Blunt did double damage on Monday. He hurt our faith in top government officials' ability to tell the truth, and he potentially set back the cause of women's health by reducing points of access to only those places that receive the governor's stamp of political approval.

For additional stories, follow the links listed below:

The Joplin Globe: http://www.joplinglobe.com/local/local_story_079011446.html/resources_printstory

KOLR10 (CBS) and FOX27: <http://www.ozarksfirst.com/content/fulltext/?cid=5694>

Springfield News Leader:

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070320/NEWS01/703200362>

and,

[http://www.news-](http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20070323&Category=NEWS01&ArtNo=703230386&SectionCat=&Template=printart)

[leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20070323&Category=NEWS01&ArtNo=703230386&SectionCat=&Template=printart](http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?Date=20070323&Category=NEWS01&ArtNo=703230386&SectionCat=&Template=printart)

Statewide Website

www.ppmissouri.org

To receive the Monday through our **Action Network** please [click here](#). You may also email ppmoks@ppslr.org with your **name in the subject line** to signup.