



# Monday *MONITOR*

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## **WELCOME BACK! LET'S DO SOMETHING PRO-ACTIVE FOR SEXUAL & REPRO HEALTH IN 2010!!**

Welcome back to our pro-choice legislative stalwarts and champions, and welcome for the first time to newly elected Representative Stacey Newman (D-73) and Senator Joe Keaveny (D-04). Keaveny was sworn in last November, and Newman will be sworn in today. We look forward to working with our elected representatives to ensure—this year—that the health of women and families takes a front seat and that the politics of mid-term electioneering does not lead to further restrictions to access to abortion care.

## **GOOD NEWS ON THE PREVENTION FRONT!**

Several pro-active, public health bills have already been pre-filed:

- **[SB627](#): Senator Justus (D-10)—Cervical Cancer Immunization.** This bill mandates that MO-DHSS send information to the parents or guardians of all females entering the 6<sup>th</sup> grade explaining the connection between HPV and cervical cancer and the availability of the HPV vaccine. This bill does not require the vaccine for admission to school.
- **[SB676](#): Senator Wright-Jones (D-05)—Prostate Cancer Prevention.** This bill establishes a Prostate Cancer Pilot Program within the Department of Health and Senior Services. Subject to appropriations, the program funds prostate cancer screening and treatment services to uninsured Missouri men at local public health departments and federally qualified health centers.
- **[SB696](#): Senator Wright-Jones (D-05)—Prevention First Act.** The provisions of the 2010 Missouri Prevention First Act are programs, policies, and services that will reduce STI's, unintended pregnancy and the need for abortion. The policies include comprehensive, medically accurate sex education, compassionate assistance for rape emergencies, birth control protection, expansion of women's health services, patient protection at pharmacies, and expedited partner therapy.
- **[HB1375](#): Representative Cooper (R-155)—Expedited Partner Therapy.** This bill allows physicians to treat the partner of a patient diagnosed with Chlamydia or Gonorrhea without an existing physician/patient relationship in order to help curb the growing rate of sexually transmitted infections. The antibiotics would be dispensed in pill form.

## **NEVERTHELESS, HARDLINERS CONTINUE TO FILE MORE RESTRICTIONS**

It would seem, with more than **30 separate laws** on the books in Missouri regulating abortion, it would be hard to find even one more restriction to enact. **Rep. Cynthia Davis (R-19)**, however, has already pre-filed 3 bills and one Constitutional Amendment restricting access to this legal medical procedure.

- **[HB1211](#) (Dusenberg, R-54) & [HB1327](#) (Davis, R-19)—2010 Abortion Restriction Bill** that also creates the crime of 'coercion of an abortion'
- **[HB1238](#) (Davis, R-19)**—A modified, but no less restrictive version of HB1327.
- **[HB1236](#) (Davis, R-19)—Abortion Physician Intimidation Act** that requires anyone referring for or performing an abortion to screen for 'risk factors' that may be unscientific or unproven, but may have been published in one of 16,000 scientific journals worldwide in the past 12 months.
- **[HB1257](#) (Smith, R-14)—Prison Time for Pregnant Women** that would criminalize a pregnant woman who goes to term before she is able to overcome her drug or alcohol problem.
- **[HB1365](#) (Emery, R-126)—Pharmacy Denial** that would protect pharmacies if their cashier refused to ring up sales of contraceptives.
- **[HJR49](#) (Davis, R-19)—Ban on Public Funds for Abortion Even in Cases of Rape & Incest** that would ban abortions in public hospitals even when a woman's life is at risk and would jeopardize federal Medicaid funding by preventing Missouri from following the federal Medicaid rules protecting women who are survivors of rape and incest.

## **WOMEN ON THE VERGE**

By Cecile Richards | Posted 12.21.09 on The Huffington Post [excerpted]

A reporter asked me today if I was surprised that the issue of abortion has become, yet again, the midnight issue in health care reform bills. Once again, at the final hour, women's rights and access have been traded away in the new Senate health care bill. Rights and access that we may not get back anytime soon, if ever.

It's hard not to be discouraged when health care access for millions of women is traded away for one vote -- but that's exactly what happened. Senator Ben Nelson put his colleagues in the Senate in an impossible position, forcing them to agree to an [illogical provision](#) in order to move the health care reform process forward.

The new [Nelson abortion provision](#) is definitely not the status quo, as it doesn't reflect current law. But not only that, it doesn't even make sense. The purported reason to add additional language to the Senate bill was to insure that federal funds aren't used to pay for abortions -- but the Nelson amendment does absolutely nothing about that. All the Nelson amendment does is impose new, additional obstacles for women to get coverage -- even for medically necessary abortions. This goes way beyond any legislation that currently exists, and no matter how you look at it, it's a huge step backward for women's health.

Under this new language, anyone -- men and women of all ages -- who participates in an insurance plan that includes abortion coverage is required to write [two separate premium checks](#) each month: one for abortion care and one for everything else. I'm just trying to picture my son writing out his health insurance payment, and then writing another check for his part of the "abortion coverage." Is this really happening?

Like the Stupak abortion ban, the Nelson abortion provision creates such complicated administrative burdens for health plans that it's highly unlikely insurers will offer abortion coverage at all.

This process isn't over. There are two very different bills to be reconciled, and lots of new information coming out every day about exactly what this amendment would do to women's health care. So let's focus on what's important: This is a health care bill, and the purpose of this health care bill is to increase health care coverage, not take it away. We need a health care bill that treats women and women's health just like everyone else -- that's all we're asking for.

*Cecile Richards is the President, Planned Parenthood Federation of America. For the full article, go to: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/cecile-richards/women-on-the-verge\\_b\\_399895.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/cecile-richards/women-on-the-verge_b_399895.html)*

## **HEALTHCARE REFORM: THE NELSON AMENDMENT**

The new abortion language in the Senate bill establishes an unworkable system that creates enormous administrative burdens for individuals and health plans for no policy reason and stigmatizes abortion care. For more on the amendment, go to: [http://www.ppadvocates.org/PPMissouri/PDFs/Nelson\\_Q&A\\_1209.pdf](http://www.ppadvocates.org/PPMissouri/PDFs/Nelson_Q&A_1209.pdf)

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