



Monday *MONITOR*

Monday, February 8, 2010

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THREE NEW PRO-ACTIVE BILLS FILED IN HOUSE

Rep. Jeanette Mott Oxford (D-59) has filed [HB 1914](#) the **Compassionate Assistance for Rape Emergencies (CARE)** bill. This bill ensures that victims of sexual assault who present at an emergency room are provided with information about, and access to emergency birth control such as Plan B. Plan B is approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a contraceptive; if the pregnancy is already established, the medication does not work, nor does it harm the pregnancy. Rep. Beth Low (D-39) filed [HB 1935](#) a **Cancer Screening Coverage** bill that requires health insurers to provide coverage for human papilloma virus (HPV) screenings for cervical cancer. And, freshman Representative Stacey Newman (D-73) filed [HB 1961](#), the **Patient Protection at Pharmacies** act. This bill 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, without discrimination or delay. This brings to 8 the number of pro-active, reproductive health-related bills that PPMO is following.

PREVENTION FIRST ACT OF 2010

A revised version of the Prevention First Act is circulating for signatures in both the House and the Senate. This bill contains measures to: ensure a comprehensive approach to sex education in our public schools; prevent further government interference in access to legal, FDA-approved contraception; protect patients at pharmacies (as in Rep. Newman's stand-alone bill); and, approve expedited partner therapy for clients with Chlamydia or gonorrhea. It is being sponsored by Representative Beth Low and Senator Joan Bray. Thirty-six members in the House and 7 Senators are already co-sponsors. If you have not yet reviewed the bill or signed on, please contact Michelle Trupiano or go directly to the sponsors. Senator Robin Wright Jones has also filed a version of PFA [SB 696](#) that includes two additional PPMO supported provisions, CARE and state Family Planning funding, and which has been referred to Senate Judiciary Committee.

TWO MORE RESTRICTIVE BILLS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

[HB 1365](#) (Emery, R-126), a **Pharmacy Denial** bill that protects pharmacies that choose to employ staff that refuse to dispense or sell contraception, and that continues to intentionally confuse emergency contraception and medication abortion, has been referred to House Children and Families Committee. [HB 1546](#) (Harris, D-110), a bill to require reporting **Why Women Seek Abortions**, has also been referred to House Children and Families. PPMO would prefer this legislative body to focus on support for comprehensive sex education in our schools and increasing access to affordable birth control options that can help reduce the number one reason women seek abortions: unintended pregnancy.

SENATOR JUSTUS' HPV BILL HEARD IN COMMITTEE

[SB 627](#) (Justus, D-10), the **Cervical Cancer Immunization** bill, was heard in the Senate Health, Mental Health, Seniors and Families Committee on Tuesday. Since this is the fourth year that the committee has heard the bill, Senator Justus kept testimony from witnesses short. Testifying in support was the American Cancer Society (Misty Snodgrass) and Missouri Family Network (Kerry Messer). There was no opposition to the bill. Senator Champion, chair of the committee, said "I hope this is the year this passes."

2010 Choice Lobby Days: Tuesday, February 16th; Tuesday, March 16th; & Wednesday, April 28th.

WOMEN'S HEALTH—ALWAYS A POLITICAL FOOTBALL

Cecile Richards on Huffington Post, February 4, 2010

Well, the good news for the New Orleans Saints and the Indianapolis Colts is that probably more women know when the Super Bowl is this year than in decades...who would have dreamed that the hottest topic in the women's health community would be a television ad to run in prime time during the biggest football game of the year?

By now, you've probably heard all about the ad that Focus on the Family, the ultimate far-right political group, is spending millions to run during the game. It apparently will feature college football player Tim Tebow and his mom talking about a deeply personal medical decision she made years ago: she decided to carry her high-risk pregnancy to term against medical advice, resulting in the birth of her Heisman Trophy-winning son, Tim.

People have been asking us at [Planned Parenthood](#) what we [think about the ad](#) and about Mrs. Tebow's decision. Though I haven't seen the ad, based on what we've heard, our answer is simple. Planned Parenthood respects the right of every woman to make medical decisions for herself.

Despite the fact that Focus on the Family's true agenda is to outlaw the right to legal abortion, with the rarest of exceptions -- Mrs. Tebow's story underscores the most basic right of women in America to be able to make the decision to continue or to terminate a pregnancy. Mrs. Tebow made the decision she felt was right for her, and that's what Planned Parenthood doctors, nurses, and other health professionals help women do every single day.

The truth is that women take decisions about their health very seriously. They consider their doctors' advice, they talk with their loved ones and people they trust -- including religious leaders -- and they carefully weigh all considerations before making the best decisions for themselves and their families. And that's the way it should be.

A couple of [great friends of Planned Parenthood](#) -- two terrific athletes -- have something to say about sports, families, and the importance of personal decision making. Take a look [HERE](#) as former college and professional football player Sean James and Olympic gold medalist Al Joyner respond to the Tebow Super Bowl ad.

Despite the intention of its far-right sponsors, the Tebow ad underscores the most basic truth -- women must be able to make personal and private medical decisions without government interference. I'm proud to live in a country that trusts women to make personal medical decisions that are their own.

Follow Cecile Richards on Twitter: www.twitter.com/cecilerichards

NOT YOUR "BUSH-ERA" ABSTINENCE-ONLY STUDY RELEASED

[excerpts from Guttmacher Institute advisory, February 2010]

An abstinence-only intervention aimed at young, urban African-American adolescents (*Ed. Note: 662 6th & 7th graders, with a mean age of 12.2 years*) successfully delayed sexual initiation among participants in the program, according to a well-designed new study, "Efficacy of a Theory-Based Abstinence-Only Intervention Over 24 Months," by John B. Jemmott and colleagues. While the evaluated program is the first abstinence-only intervention to demonstrate this positive impact in a randomized control trial, **it was not a rigid "abstinence-only-until-marriage" program of the type that, until this year, received significant federal funding.** The evaluation, therefore, adds important new information to the question of "what works" in sex education, but it essentially **leaves intact the significant body of evidence showing that abstinence-only-until-marriage programming that met previous federal guidelines is ineffective.**

- The program was not infused with morality, was medically accurate and did not disparage contraception.
- "The intervention did not contain inaccurate information, portray sex in a negative light, or use a moralistic tone. The training and curriculum manual explicitly instructed the facilitators not to disparage the efficacy of condoms or allow the view that condoms are ineffective to go uncorrected."
- The study adds to, but does not contradict, the body of evidence about "what works" in sex education
- The evaluation does not contradict the strong body of evidence that rigid abstinence-only-until-marriage programs are ineffective.
- "The results of this trial should not be taken to mean that all abstinence-only interventions are efficacious."

For full release, go to:

<http://www.guttmacher.org/media/evidencecheck/2010/02/03/EvidenceCheck-Jemmott-Study.pdf>

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Statewide Website
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