



# Monday *MONITOR*

Monday, March 22, 2010

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## MARCH MADNESS CONTINUES IN HOUSE CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE

On Wednesday, House Children & Families Committee went into executive session to vote on **HB1238** (Davis, R-19) one of five **Abortion Restriction** bills filed this session. However, a substitute offered by Rep. Davis for approval included **HB1236** (Davis, R-19) the **Physician Intimidation Act**, **HB1365** (Emery, R-126) **Pharmacy Denial**, and **HB1546** (Harris, D-110) **Even More Abortion Reporting Requirements** and ONE SENTENCE from the nine page **HB1238**.

Representative Mott Oxford asked the Chair to delay the executive session since the hearing on March 3<sup>rd</sup>—posted as a hearing on **HB1238**—had in fact entertained testimony in support of **HB1236** (see article in the March 15<sup>th</sup> Monday *Monitor*), a violation of the Sunshine Law. At first, the Chair denied this request claiming the hearing had been legitimate, but she finally had to withdraw the substitute and end the executive session with no action. In addition to the Sunshine violation incurred by the 'bait and switch' hearing, House rules make clear that while several bills may be rolled together into a substitute, the merged bill must contain most of the language from the original, underlying bill. The substitute offered by the Chair had one sentence.

Rep. Davis then redrafted the bill to include all of **HB1238** (which has still not received a hearing) along with **HB1236**, **HB1365**, and **HB1546** and scheduled an executive session upon morning adjournment on Thursday. Despite the undemocratic process, the pro-choice members of the committee were prepared to offer substantive amendments and were prepared to take as long as necessary to be sure the bill was properly vetted and addressed. At the last minute, Rep. Davis cancelled the meeting and has rescheduled the executive session for Wednesday morning of this week.

Also in the House, **HB1327** (Davis, R-19), yet another **Abortion Restriction** bill, was voted out of House Rules Committee and is on the House Perfection calendar. And, in good news, **HB1375** (Cooper, R-155), **Expedited Partner Therapy**, was voted out of Rules Committee and is now on the House Consent calendar.

## IS MARCH MADNESS SPREADING TO THE SENATE?

If you are finding it hard to keep track of the debate on abortion restrictions in the House, it now seems to be almost as complicated in the Senate. On Wednesday, the Senate brought up **SB792** (Dempsey, R-23), **Even More Abortion Reporting Requirements**, for debate. This bill would have abortion providers ask the woman why she is seeking an abortion and report that information to the state, a clear violation of the doctor/patient relationship aimed at intimidating and shaming women. When Senator Dempsey introduced the bill, he offered a Senate Substitute that included all of **SB793**, Senator Mayer's Abortion Restriction bill. The substitute had not been distributed beforehand and was a surprise to our pro-choice champions and seemed also to surprise the rest of the Senate. Senators debated SS/SB792 for approximately an hour before it was laid over. Senators Days and Callahan carried the debate for the Democrats.

On Thursday, Senator Mayer distributed a Substitute to the Substitute on SB792. This Substitute included the language from Sen. Dempsey's bill, plus language from previous versions of the Abortion Restriction bill that established the so-called 'crime of coercion of an abortion.'

PPMO is appalled that women's reproductive health, once again, is nothing more than an election year political football to anti-abortion members of the General Assembly. While attempting to score points on abortion, nothing is being done to support bills that can actually help safely reduce unintended pregnancies and abortions. Missouri already has more than 30 laws on the books regulating and restricting abortion, more than any other medical procedure, even those procedures with much higher risk than abortion. It is time to stop playing politics and truly help women protect their health through prevention.

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**MORE ADVOCATES COMING TO THE CAPITOL SOON!!**  
**Final Pro-Choice Coalition Lobby Day—Wednesday, April 28, 2010**

## **ABORTION INSURANCE BAN BILL TO BE HEARD IN SENATE COMMITTEE**

**SB747** (Rupp, R-02)—the **Abortion Insurance Ban**—will be heard in Senate Small Business and Insurance Committee this afternoon. This bill would prohibit health insurance exchanges established in Missouri from offering health insurance policies *or optional riders that provide coverage for elective abortions and are paid for with private funds*. Missouri already has a ban on insurance policies from covering abortion services except through a single-service rider. There is no evidence that additional rider policies are generally available in Missouri or the other 4 states with similar insurance bans. This bill should be rejected.

## **SECOND SUCCESSFUL CHOICE LOBBY DAY IN THE CAPITOL**

More than 60 super-charged and well-informed reproductive health advocates visited with legislators in the House and Senate last Tuesday. This was the second of three pro-choice coalition lobby days focused on helping our elected officials better understand the benefits of family planning and comprehensive sex education. Participants urged legislators to focus on prevention rather than unnecessary additional abortion restrictions.

Advocates recognized and thanked the pro-choice champions who are retiring or running for higher office with a certificate and 'Practice Safe Sex Politics' button.

The third choice coalition lobby day will be Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **US HOUSE PASSES HISTORIC HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL**

*Statement of Cecile Richards, President of PPFA, Sunday, March 21, 2010*

"Today is a truly historic day for the American people who have long demanded affordable, quality health care coverage.

"For more than a year, Planned Parenthood has worked tirelessly for a health care reform bill that would fix our broken health care system, strengthen women's health, and achieve quality, affordable health care for all Americans. Today, monumental progress was made toward achieving these goals with the passage of historic health care reform legislation by the U.S. House of Representatives, despite a symbolic gesture, in the form of an Executive Order, to anti-choice Congressman Bart Stupak (D-MI), which has diverted attention from the central goal of health care reform — controlling costs and extending coverage.

"As a trusted health care provider to millions of women and families across the country, Planned Parenthood applauds the fact that this legislation would extend health care coverage, including family planning, to tens of millions of women and families, guarantee access to affordable life-saving screenings for cervical and breast cancer and other serious health problems, protect women against gender discrimination by private insurers, end the practice of dropping coverage because of pre-existing conditions, and significantly increase access to reproductive health care. The proposal also includes a commonsense provision to expand family planning under Medicaid, which would significantly increase access to essential preventive health care for millions of women.

"As a result of this historic expansion of health care coverage to more than 30 million Americans, the doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals who work for Planned Parenthood health centers will be providing care to many more women, men, and families who will be seeking primary and preventive care.

"Planned Parenthood is also extremely pleased that members of the House listened to the millions of women and men who expressed their strong opposition to the Stupak abortion ban. Stopping the Stupak ban was a high priority for women across the country who rejected the notion that they would not be able to even use their own money to obtain private insurance coverage for abortion. It was a tough fight, but we salute Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D- CA), Congressman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), members of the House Pro-Choice Caucus, and all others who stood up for women's health and women's rights.

"Nonetheless, we regret that a pro-choice president of a pro-choice nation was forced to sign an Executive Order that further codifies the proposed anti-choice language in the health care reform bill, originally proposed by Senator Ben Nelson of Nebraska. What the president's executive order did not do is include the complete and total ban on private health insurance coverage for abortion that Congressman Bart Stupak (D-MI) had insisted upon. So while we regret that this proposed Executive Order has given the imprimatur of the president to Senator Nelson's language, it is critically important to note that it does not include the Stupak abortion ban.

"This is a historic day for American people. We regret that a gesture to Congressman Stupak has diverted the nation's focus from this bill's accomplishments, including the extension of family planning to millions of women."

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