



Monday *MONITOR*

Monday, April 12, 2010

Contact: Michelle Trupiano – 573.424.8717 (cell)

SLOW WEEK FOR ANTI-ABORTION ADVOCATES

The only activity regarding any of the anti-abortion bills last week was the approval, in House Ways and Means committee, of **HB 2252** (Faith, R-15), the **Tax Credits for Crisis Pregnancy Centers** bill. While all other tax credits are coming under extreme scrutiny at this time of severe budget cuts, the committee approved a bill that gives state financial approval to organizations that deliberately mislead, misinform, and attempt to intimidate women into carrying a pregnancy to term. Even in the best of times, this is a bill that does not deserve support; in this economy, it deserves sound rejection.

HEARINGS THIS WEEK

HB1327 & 2000 (Davis, R-19 & Pratt, R-55), the **2010 Abortion Restriction** bill, will be heard tonight in Senate Judiciary Committee. The committee already heard one of the many 2010 Abortion Restriction bills—**SB 793** (Mayer, R-25)—earlier in the session, however this version goes much further. As outlined in previous issues of the *Monday Monitor*, this bill would create the crime of ‘coercion of an abortion’, require providers to notify county prosecutors if they are approached by a pregnant teen under 18 about an abortion (even if she chooses not to obtain one, even if she has parental consent), and add layers of additional requirements to the informed consent process. The bill should be rejected by the committee.

HB 1375 (Cooper, R- 156), the **Expedited Partner Therapy** bill, will be heard in Senate Seniors and Families Committee tomorrow morning. This public health bill should receive unequivocal support.

MEET THE NEW COMMITTEE: THE HOUSE “ABORTION-ONLY” COMMITTEE

An April 7 article in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch described a bill “informally known as ‘Sam’s Law’ that would strengthen protections for children in non-licensed daycare facilities.” The bill is an attempt to address the issue of a child who died last year from “a non-accidental head injury, while in the care of a babysitter.” The bill would “block unlicensed childcare providers from continuing to care for children if criminal charges are pending against them. The bill would also direct the Department of Health and Senior Services to investigate those childcare providers.” **HB1534** was filed by anti-choice Rep. Linda Fischer (D-107) and referred to House Children and Families Committee in February and has yet to receive a hearing.

According to the article, Davis explains her lack of action on ‘Sam’s Law’ by saying her committee’s “main purpose is to deal with abortion issues.” It seems once children are born they are somebody else’s problem.

The Monday *MONITOR* thought the Chair might benefit from reading the official description of her committee: ***The Special Standing Committee on Children and Families may consider and report on all bills referred to it relating to the health, well-being and security of Missouri’s youth, children and families.*** If Rep. Davis would like to form a new “Abortion-Only” Committee, perhaps she should petition Speaker Richard.

SCOTT ROEDER SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON

Statement by Peter B. Brownlie, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri

APRIL 1, 2010: Planned Parenthood of Kansas & Mid-Missouri is grateful for the decision in Sedgwick County to sentence Scott Roeder to life in prison with the possibility of parole after 50 years served after being convicted of first-degree murder in the assassination of Dr. George Tiller. We are satisfied the criminal justice system in Kansas has worked. Mr. Roeder’s conviction and sentencing represents a victory for the rule of law and a clear message that domestic terrorists will be held accountable in Kansas as elsewhere in America. Roeder’s was the worst and most recent of many acts of terrorism aimed at physicians and health centers in Kansas in the last 20 years. All of us at Planned Parenthood of Kansas & Mid-Missouri renew our support for and condolences to Dr. Tiller’s family and wish them peace and safety in the wake of the sentencing. We hope today’s outcome will begin to bring closure to this sad chapter of Kansas history.

LAWMAKERS CONTINUE EFFORTS TO RESTRICT WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Letter to the Editor, Springfield News Leader, April 6, 2010

Last week the Missouri House passed House Bill 1327 and 2000, a bill that once again ignores the priorities of Missourians and instead focuses on eliminating access to abortion care in Missouri. By adding many new, burdensome and unnecessary requirements to the informed-consent process for abortion, this bill intrudes on the doctor/patient relationship and ignores the standard practice of medical care already in place. Under the superficial guise of "protecting women," the sponsors and supporters of this bill are clear in their intent - make it as difficult as possible for women seeking abortion care and scare physicians away from providing the procedure.

Abortion is already the most highly regulated medical procedure with over 30 state laws controlling it. Currently, any woman seeking an abortion must go through counseling, and sign a consent form stating that her decision is completely free and voluntary, and then wait at least 24 hours before having the procedure. HB1327 would require doctors to report teens to prosecuting attorneys if they seek an abortion, regardless of whether they actually obtain it. This is, again, despite the fact that teens have written permission from the parent; regardless of the fact that doctors and nurses already adhere to a thorough screening and informed-consent process and are mandated reporters if abuse is suspected.

This bill is too extreme for Missouri and doesn't do a thing to improve health care or reduce the need for abortion. Government's focus has gone awry. If the sponsors were actually concerned with reducing the number of abortions they would focus on prevention. Instead of further restricting abortion to pacify their base, they'd search for solutions through medically accurate sex education (which Missouri still does not have) and increased access to family planning services (which are also continually in jeopardy).

Jenna Smith lives in Springfield

DON'T RESTRICT VICTIMS

Letter to the Editor, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, April 8, 2010

I applaud the courageous efforts of state Rep. Stacy Newman, D-Richmond Heights, to fight for reproductive rights on the House floor last week. Although the House took an unfortunate step toward disabling many women from receiving safe and legal abortions, pro-choice champions stood up to share their stories.

Ms. Newman's story offers a prime example of why it's dangerous to continue to put restrictions on abortion and women's health care. Restrictive bills of the sort that continue to be filed and in the House and the Senate can have unintended consequences, such as domestic violence, for women who are victims of rape or incest.

Not giving a woman the right to decide for herself to have an abortion after she has been a victim of an act that already is dehumanizing is embarrassing, illogical, demeaning and condescending.

These restrictions convey that women cannot make decisions about their bodies. Ms. Newman's personal experience as a rape survivor is a powerful reminder about why these bans on abortion are dangerous. If restrictions on abortion continue and coercion becomes a crime, rape and incest survivors who become pregnant may not live to tell their stories. Restrict the rapist, not the victim. Thanks to Ms. Newman and all of the other pro-choice champions in Missouri who fight for women's reproductive rights.

Kersha Deibel — St. Louis

RESIGNATION OF SUPREME COURT JUSTICE JOHN PAUL STEVENS

Statement from Cecile Richards, President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Friday, February 9, 2010

"United States Supreme Court Associate Justice John Paul Stevens has served the American people with dignity and distinction.

"During his long and productive tenure as an associate justice, he protected and strengthened individual liberties embodied in our nation's Constitution and Bill of Rights; respected legal precedent that is fundamental to the fabric of our society, and upheld the letter of the law.

"In the landmark Supreme Court case, *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, Justice Stevens expressed his view of equality, writing, 'Roe is an integral part of a correct understanding of both the concept of liberty and the basic equality of men and women.' Stevens quoted Justice Thurgood Marshall: "Our whole constitutional heritage rebels at the thought of giving government the power to control men's minds."

And concluded, 'The same holds true for the power to control women's bodies.'

"We thank Justice Stevens for his service to the American people and for his fundamental understanding of what freedom means to women. We honor his legacy and wish him well in his retirement.

"As President Obama now turns to selecting a new justice for the court, we have full confidence that he will choose someone who will stand equally strong for the constitutional principles that Justice Stevens upheld so steadfastly."