



Planned Parenthood®

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PINK SIGNS PROTEST BLUNT FUNDING CUT

David Catanese, KY3.com Springfield, August 14 - excerpted

"Pink signs are popping up around a Springfield neighborhood to make a political point about healthcare for women. Planned Parenthood of Springfield is putting signs up in the neighborhood around Governor Matt Blunt's home to protest his decision to cut the group's state funding. The Governor took away Planned Parenthood's funding for cervical and breast cancer screenings because he doesn't want taxpayer money going to abortion providers. But Planned Parenthood does not provide abortions in Springfield. "For him to take that money from Planned Parenthood, just to make a political point with his anti-choice supporters ticks me off," said Lola Butcher, supporter of Planned Parenthood..." [<http://www.ky3.com/news/9163821.html> for TV coverage]

TRO EXTENDED IN KANSAS CITY SUIT AGAINST UNNECESSARY CLINIC REGULATIONS

On August 27, US District Judge Ortrie Smith issued a temporary restraining order in PPKM v. Drummond et al, the suit challenging HB1055's burdensome and unnecessary abortion clinic regulations. In the Order, Smith noted: "The Brous Center does not perform any surgeries, yet the Act would require the Brous Center to comply with regulations uniquely applicable to establishments that do. On the surface, this does not make a lot of sense. Moreover, Defendants' explanations to date have not been terribly persuasive. For instance, it was suggested that adverse side effects from the medications could necessitate surgery – but then, adverse side effects from many medications could necessitate surgery. Of all the establishments that dispense medication (e.g., doctor's offices, pharmacies), why is it only those that dispense medication for the purpose of inducing an abortion that must be prepared to perform surgery?"

On Monday of this week, Judge Smith heard arguments in the request for a Preliminary Injunction. He extended the TRO and requested that additional testimony be submitted. He indicated he would try to deliver an opinion by September 24.

E-MAILS REVEAL HYPOCRISY IN ACTIONS OF BLUNT'S CHIEF OF STAFF

Tony Messenger, Editorial, Springfield News Leader: September 9, 2007—excerpts. For full article, go to <http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070909/COLUMNISTS20/709090350/1006/OPINIONS>

Ed Martin's a big fan of government openness if it serves his political purposes. But ask Gov. Matt Blunt's chief of staff for his public records, and Martin sings a different tune.

That's what he did last week when I asked to see his e-mails from the week of Aug. 20. That was the week that the Republican Party and various pro-life groups went on the offensive over Planned Parenthood's lawsuit against the state[...]

It turns out that some of the work by pro-life activists was coordinated by Martin, while he was on the clock working for the state. So says an e-mail Martin sent at 9:23 the night of the 20th from his taxpayer-provided ed.martin@mo.gov e-mail account.

"This lawsuit has the potential of bringing down the a2a program as well as the other parts of 1055. We need to mobilize the supporters — to get Nixon off the case and get a new lawyer," says the e-mail, which was sent to a couple of pro-life advocates. "Please have people write letters and call Nixon and the press. We need you to put out press statements asap. This is a huge battle."

The e-mail was sent to me by one of the pro-life advocates who ended up receiving it. When I received it, I wanted to see if there were more like it, so I filed a Sunshine Law request with the governor's office. Blunt's deputy general counsel, Scott Eckersly, responded to my request for public documents by saying there were no such e-mails. But what about the one I already had? I e-mailed Martin to ask him about it. "It sure looks like an e-mail from me," he said, via e-mail. Martin e-mails a lot. Hundreds of times a day, he said.

He doesn't save those records. And that's par for the course for the governor's office, according to Blunt spokesman Rich Chrismer. "None of Ed's emails on this topic are or were available anywhere," Chrismer wrote in an e-mail. "Many employees receive and send hundreds of emails every day and keeping all emails would risk slowing down or shutting down our system"[...]

I'm[...]aware that as many companies do, my company archives old e-mails on a server or backup tape somewhere. So, too, do most government organizations. They do so because it's the policy of the state to do precisely that[...]

[...]Martin's e-mail mixes partisan campaigning with the process of doing his state job. Martin was using public funds for partisan political purposes. That's not the way the chief of staff sees it, of course. He says, via e-mail, that it's appropriate for him to contact people and organizations who are "pursuing policy aims." [...]Let's assume for a moment Martin is right. He's just doing his job.

If, indeed, his e-mail encouraging private groups to lobby Nixon to get off the case is just part of doing the state's business, then why isn't the record public? And why aren't the other e-mails he most likely sent on the matter being made available? Why is he systematically destroying public records? What is Martin hiding? Indeed, if the e-mails are legitimate state business, then according to the Sunshine Law, they're public. And according to Section 109 of the Missouri Revised Statutes and the state's official policy on retention of records, they ought to be maintained as public records for three years[...]In Martin's case, this isn't some small-time bureaucrat who's run afoul of complicated public records law. Martin, a lawyer, is leading the governor's charge in criticizing the Appellate Judicial Commission for not being open enough about its procedure for choosing the next Supreme Court judge. But his criticisms lose their luster when it turns out he's only a believer in open records when they help bolster the political case he's trying to make[...] (S)omebody's got some explaining to do.

SENATOR KOSTER: WELCOME TO THE PRO-CHOICE/PRO-PREVENTION POSITION.

"From this point on, I'm going to support the structure of Roe...(a)nd I'm going to work for policies that will reduce the unintended pregnancies in this state." [St. Louis Post-Dispatch, August 2].

Planned Parenthood is extremely pleased that Senator Koster is now embracing the common sense goal of reducing unintended pregnancies in Missouri. And, that he agrees — as do the vast majority of voters — that abortion should remain safe and legal. At the same time, we regret he cannot hold those views within the Republican Party. Abortion, family planning, and sex education are not partisan issues, though Governor Blunt and the legislative leadership work hard to make it so.