

Pro-Life Wisconsin



Defending them all...

P.O. Box 221 Brookfield, WI 53008-0221
Phone (262) 796-1111 Fax (262) 796-1115
info@prolifewisconsin.org www.prolifewisconsin.org

November 2, 2009

TO: Members, Wisconsin State Assembly

FROM: Matt Sande, Director of Legislation

RE: **Opposition to AB 458: prohibiting “abstinence-only” or “abstinence-centered” human growth and development programs**

Pro-Life Wisconsin strongly urges you to **vote NO on Assembly Bill (AB) 458**, the so-called “Healthy Youth Act,” legislation revolutionizing Wisconsin’s K-12 instruction in human growth and development.

Assembly Bill 458 would effectively prohibit local school districts from adopting “abstinence-only” or “abstinence-centered” human growth and development programs – a freedom and flexibility they now enjoy under current law. This heavy-handed bill ties the hands of local human growth and development advisory committees – a violation of the principle of local control. These advisory committees work very hard to craft curricula that match the goals and values of their local communities. Forcing a one-size-fits-all state curriculum on them would effectively destroy them.

Proponents of AB 458 emphasize the reduction of “risky sexual behaviors” among our youth as the primary aim of the legislation. If that is the goal, forcing contraception education and instruction into the curriculum is not the answer. In fact, it is ineffective and dangerous. Government-funded birth control, whether provided directly or promoted educationally, encourages sexual promiscuity and with it a host of social pathologies including underage pregnancies, chemical and surgical abortions, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

Hormonal contraceptives including the Pill, the Morning-After Pill, and the Patch provide no protection from any of the 25 known STDs, including HIV, human papillomavirus, chlamydia, herpes, gonorrhea, genital warts, syphilis and hepatitis B. Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection is currently the most prevalent sexually-transmitted disease. “High risk” subtypes of sexually-transmitted HPV cause 70 percent of cervical cancer in women. The only way you can prevent getting an HPV infection is to avoid direct contact with the virus. **Research studies have not confirmed that male latex condoms prevent transmission of HPV, so even a curriculum’s emphasis on barrier methods is irresponsible.**

Under the bill, if a school district chooses to adopt a human growth and development program it would be forced to include in its curriculum instruction on the “health benefits, side effects, and proper use of contraceptives and barrier methods.” **Yet hormonal contraceptives have been proven dangerous to women’s health.** Users of the pill and the morning-after pill have an increased risk of blood clotting and ectopic pregnancy, both of which can be fatal. The Ortho Evra patch is being blamed for a number of deaths due to blood clots, heart attacks and strokes. How do these powerful, steroidal drug regimens improve our children’s health?

Assembly Bill 458 stresses the importance of “medically accurate information.” **Will such information include the medical fact that most if not all hormonal birth control drugs and devices cause early chemical abortions?** The morning-after pill (a high dosage of the birth control pill), the intrauterine device (IUD), Depo Provera, the Patch, and the Pill can act to *terminate* a pregnancy by chemically altering the lining of the uterus (endometrium) so that a newly conceived child (human embryo) is unable to implant in the womb, thus starving and dying. This mechanism of action is termed a pre-implantation chemical abortion.

One need only read the package inserts or explore the websites of individual abortifacient brand-name drugs to verify their abortion causing effect. Their pharmacological mechanisms of action are clearly stated. Young women have a right to know the abortion-causing effects of hormonal contraceptives so that they may make informed decisions that respect the lives of human beings, even in their earliest stages.

Concerning the ***Volunteer Health Care Provider Program***, Pro-Life Wisconsin strongly opposes removing the current law provision that prohibits a school-based health volunteer from providing human growth and development instruction in the areas of human sexuality, reproduction and family planning. Sexual and “reproductive health” issues are not properly under the purview of a school health room physician or nurse. Five years ago, our organization made a good faith compromise with Representative Richards guaranteeing this limitation on human growth and development instruction by a volunteer provider. Section 10 of AB 458 strikes this common sense restriction from current law therefore abrogating this compromise.

The ***Volunteer Health Care Provider Program*** confers legal protection to a health care volunteer by treating the volunteer as an agent of the state under the Department of Health Services. Therefore, if a civil lawsuit were to be brought against the health care volunteer as the result of services provided through the program, the state of Wisconsin would assume legal liability.

Assembly Bill 458 as currently drafted would permit contraceptive or abortion education by a **Planned Parenthood** school volunteer health provider. This could involve a referral to the nearest Planned Parenthood clinic where a child could be given contraceptive drugs and devices or directly referred to one of Planned Parenthood’s abortion clinics. Wisconsin taxpayers should not be assuming legal costs for a civil action brought by the parents of a student who has been referred by a health volunteer to a local Planned Parenthood clinic and there given birth control drugs such as the “morning-after-pill” or referred for an abortion, ending in an adverse outcome.

Finally, **it must be noted that that early teen sexual activity, even if consensual, is against the law.** Wisconsin Statutes 948.02(2) states, “(w)hoever has sexual contact or sexual intercourse with a person who has not attained the age of 16 years is guilty of a Class C felony.” Violators, including teens, can be placed on Wisconsin’s Sex Offender Registry. It is clear that our contraception sex education programs aid and abet our children in the commission of this second degree sexual assault (statutory rape) crime. And then we punish them as “sex offenders” when they get caught. This is complete hypocrisy, to say the least.

Again, **please vote NO on AB 458.** Thank you for your consideration.