



Legislation (Continued)

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exchanges to write two monthly checks (one for an abortion care rider and one for all other health care). Even employers will have to write two separate checks for each of their employees requesting the abortion rider.

⇒ *President Obama made an eleventh-hour agreement to issue an executive order lending the weight of his office to the anti-abortion measures included in the bill.* This executive order helps to cement the misconception that the Hyde Amendment is settled law rather than what it really is - an illegitimate tacking on to an annual must-pass appropriations bill.

⇒ *The bill permits age-rating, the practice of imposing higher premiums on older people.* This practice has a disproportionate impact on women, whose incomes and savings are lower due to a lifetime of systematic wage discrimination.

⇒ *The bill also permits gender-rating, the practice of charging women higher premiums simply because they are women.* Large-group plans (more than 100 employees) sold through the exchanges will be permitted to discriminate against women -- having an especially harmful impact in workplaces where women predominate.

⇒ *Preexisting conditions restrictions/costs are not entirely eliminated.* Insurance companies will no longer be able to deny health insurance to people with preexisting conditions. But they don't have to provide the coverage at the same cost they quote to people without the preexisting condition. This would include conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, etc.

National NOW is

working to have Congress eliminate the Hyde amendment and will continue their work for passage of a single-payer health care program at both the state and federal levels.

Pennsylvania is one of the states at the forefront for passage of Single-Payer Healthcare, which PA NOW **supports**. There are two bills in the General Assembly on this issue.

SR 267 in Re SB 400: State Health Care Economic Impact Study—This resolution creates a study to review the impact of PA's proposed "Family and Business Healthcare Security Act" (**SB 400**) on the state. A bipartisan majority (34 of 50) of the PA Senators who have signed on as sponsors of the bill. In order to get a hearing to pass the Resolution, pressure needs to be put on to Senators Dominic Pileggi, Joseph Scarnati, Jake Corman, and Don White. Please call them and tell them you want a hearing NOW!

SB 400 and HB 1600. These are the bills that will create the "Family and Business Healthcare Security Act" Both bills provide comprehensive, universal health coverage regardless of

preexisting conditions or ability to pay; these bills also preserve the private health care system with the right of individuals to choose their own doctors. **PA NOW urges passage of the Economic Impact Study as well as HB 1600 / SB 400.**

Care Giving

HB 245 — PA NOW **supports** this bill, which amends the Family Caregiver Support Act to provide lottery fund monies to assist persons who are primary at-home caregivers of "functionally dependent and victims of chronic dementia" who earn less than 200% of federal poverty income. This bill unanimously passed the House on March 30, 2009. It has remained in the Senate Aging and Youth Committee since then.

Poverty Issues

HB 1766 – would require a 90-day residency period in PA before being eligible for any Dept of Welfare benefit. **NOW opposes** In these poor economic times, this could put families lives at threat if this denial prevents access to food, housing, and/or health care that would otherwise be

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available. Bill is currently in the House Health and Human Services Committee.

Lesbian Rights

HB 300— LGBT Civil Rights Bill. PA NOW **supports** this bill, which seeks to amend the PA Human Relations Act to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation & gender identity in employment, housing, & public accommodations. HB 300 has passed out of the House State Government Committee on March 5, 2009 and is now in the House Appropriations Committee.

Promoting Diversity & Ending Racial Discrimination

SB 9, HB 44, & HB 1184 – requires all recipients of public benefits over age 18 to sign an affidavit and then have their names checked through the US Department of Homeland Security SAVE (federal Systematic Alien Verification of Entitlement) program to prove they are citizens or legal residents of US before receiving benefits. PA NOW **opposes** all three bills as they target legal immigrants with a flawed database system

that denies services to citizens and legal residents of the US. Most people denied services through this program are people of color. HB 44 was referred to House Health and Human Services Committee. HB 1184 was referred to the House Intergovernmental Affairs Committee. SB 9 was passed by the full Senate on April 3, 2009 and has sat in the House State Government Committee since then.

Stopping Violence Against Women

Protection from Abuse

HB 1191—PA NOW **supports** this bill. It creates a “Criminal Protective Order” for people who are being stalked, intimidated, or threatened by another. It adds a Civil Protection from Abuse Order to prevent abuse (sexual or physical) even in cases where there is no familial relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. It also creates a permanent state-wide registry of ALL criminal and civil protective orders. This bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

SB 432 – PA NOW **supports** this bill. This

bill would create a “Sexual Violence Victim Protection Order” for sexual violence victims. Basically, this is a Protection From Abuse law for victims of sexual assault. This bill is awaiting a final vote in the Senate before being sent to the House.

Human Trafficking

SB1227— PA NOW **supports** this bill. This bill mandates the posting of the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline, in key locations throughout the state to provide assistance, tip reporting and training on human trafficking to victims, community members and law enforcement. Posting of signs would be required in massage parlors, spas, restaurants, bars, taverns, hotels or clubs that have a valid liquor or malt or brewed beverage license, adult entertainment enterprises, hotels or motels found to be a drug-related nuisance, airports, train stations or bus stations, and welcome centers and rest areas operated by the Dept of Transportation. This bill was referred to Senate Labor & Industry Committee on February 4, 2010.

SR 253—PA NOW **supports** this bill. VICTORY! This is a Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to establish an advisory committee to study the problem of human trafficking and to make a report to the Senate on the issue of human trafficking, including a proposed State plan for the prevention of human trafficking and any recommendations for changes in State law, policies and procedures. Adopted by Senate on April 20, 2010.

Shackling of Pregnant Women

SB 1074—PA NOW **supports** this bill. This bill prohibits correctional facilities within the state from shackling pregnant women during labor and delivery. FYI, most jurisdictions in Pennsylvania either have no policy or have explicit policy allowing this procedure. Currently, only the PA Department of Corrections and the Philadelphia Prison Board are the only know jurisdictions known to prohibit this practice (Philadelphia NOW helped create this prohibition in the city). In addition, the Centre

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County Prison Board is currently rewriting their policy after they agreed to not shackle a pregnant woman in January 2010 at the behest of PA NOW. This bill has passed the Senate and was referred to the House Judiciary Committee on March 18, 2010.

Family Law

HB 90 – Uniform Child Abduction Prevention Act – bill creates procedures for determining when a child is likely to be abducted allowing a court to implement child abduction prevention

procedures. Restrictions could include – stay away order, travel restrictions, removal of child's passport or stop order for passport, and visitation restrictions. While this bill may help protect children from familial kidnapping, it could also prevent international women who are fleeing a domestic violence situation from leaving, resulting in the entire family remaining in danger. Until this conflict is resolved, PA NOW **opposes** this bill. This bill has passed out of the House and is awaiting

a Senate floor vote. HB 463 – Joint Custody bill mandates that in contested custody cases, physical custody goes to the parent who in the opinion of the court is more likely to allow visitations. Contrary to Fathers' Rights groups' arguments, only 1% of cases are litigated. Mothers usually get custody by agreement of the parties in the rest of divorce cases. In addition, *there is a pervasive attitude in the courts that allegations of child abuse are not true.* Many professionals involved in custody cases involving allegations of child abuse

believe that allegations of abuse are presumptively false, simply a nuclear weapon in the ongoing divorce custody war. A study conducted in 2008 by a statewide parental education program found *that only 9% of these allegations were false.* With this belief by professionals in the court system, custody of children by their alleged abuser would be more likely to happen if this bill passes. PA NOW therefore **opposes** this bill. This bill continues to sit in the House Judiciary Committee.

NOW/PAC Endorses Lois Herr for Congress

On Saturday, November 7, 2009, Congressman Joe Pitts of Lancaster, PA, along with Bart Stupak, inserted an amendment into the House version of the health care bill that denied access to abortions through the proposed health insurance reform (A slightly different version of this prohibition put into the Senate version of the bill by Senator Nelson became law in March when the health care bill was signed into law by President Obama). Two weeks later, on

November 21, 2009 Pennsylvania NOW, National NOW, and Planned Parenthood PA Advocates held a protest rally against Rep. Joe Pitts for co-authoring the Stupak-Pitts amendment to the health care reform bill.

During the rally, the National NOW PAC announced their endorsement of long-time NOW member and women's rights advocate Lois Herr for this seat.

Here's the speech given by Terry O'Neill, Chair of the National

NOW PAC endorsing Lois for this seat.

The National Organization for Women Political Action Committee is proud to announce our endorsement of Lois Herr for Congress in Pennsylvania's 16th District. Lois is taking on the all-important challenge of unseating Rep. Joe Pitts, co-author of the outrageous Stupak-Pitts Amendment. Lois rightly called this amendment "a direct attack on the freedom and privacy of American women."

Thanks in large part to Pitts' efforts, the House's version of health care reform now stands as the greatest threat to women's fundamental right to abortion in decades. That's why we're here today on Joe Pitts' home turf -- not only to express outrage at his actions but also to demonstrate our commitment to getting Lois Herr elected in this district next November.

Lois is dedicated to providing affordable

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Guide on page 2.**

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Endorsement of Lois Herr by NOW/PAC (continued)

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health care to every person in the United States, but not at the expense of women's access to reproductive health services. She is a longtime NOW member and a strong supporter of constitutional equality, equal pay, affirmative action, equal marriage rights and the full range of feminist issues. Lois understands the hurdles that women face every day in this country, and when we send her to Capitol Hill, she will work to improve the lives of women and girls.

We have a battle ahead of us, but I am confident that the people of Pennsylvania's 16th District will see the light. The current health care debate has revealed the cynical side of law-making and exposed those legislators who are only too willing to throw women overboard for the sake of political expediency. To those like Joe Pitts, I say: if women's rights aren't safe when you're in office, then we'll just have to replace you. And I can't think of a better candidate to take your seat than Lois Herr.



L. to R.: Congressional Candidate Lois Herr (D), PA 16th CD; PA NOW President Joanne Tosti-Vasey; Lancaster Councilwoman Louise Williams; National NOW President Terry O'Neill; and State Representative Barbara McIlvaine-Smith.