

public affairs update

Federal Abortion Ban

The U.S. Supreme Court is expected to issue a decision in the cases of *Gonzales v. Planned Parenthood* and *Gonzales v. Carhart*. Both cases challenged the Federal Abortion Ban, that would outlaw abortion as early as 12 weeks in pregnancy.

It's possible — some court observers would say likely — that the court will use this opportunity to overturn more than 30 years of rulings that protected women's health from dangerous laws that restrict abortion.

The fact is court decisions, and the judges who make those decisions, matter. With the stroke of a pen, judges can take away rights we have fought for years to earn.

A decision could be issued any day between now and June, and we need to be ready. That's why Planned Parenthood is setting up the Supreme Court Emergency Text Message System. If you sign up, you will receive a text message as soon as the court makes its ruling, with details about what action you can take.

Sign up to be part of the Planned Parenthood text message alert system today, to make sure you are ready to move into action as soon as the court rules in the Gonzales case. Sign up at www.saveroe.com/node/6319.

You Did It - Keroack is gone!

VICTORY! Anti-birth control advocate Eric Keroack will no longer oversee Title X, the nation's family planning program! The press statement from the Department of Health and Human Services stated that Keroack's resignation comes in response to action taken against him by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Office of Medicaid.

The day he took office, Planned Parenthood launched a massive grassroots campaign against Keroack, rallying a nationwide groundswell of opposition to his appointment. The Bush administration must replace Keroack with a legitimate, mainstream public health expert who supports family planning and access to birth control. We will continue to keep you updated on further developments.

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 **Planned Parenthood**[®]
Southeastern Pennsylvania

public affairs update, cont.

Union Pacific Ruling

On March 15, women's health suffered a significant setback. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit issued a shameful ruling that limits access to birth control. It all started when Union Pacific, the largest railroad in North America, made a reprehensible decision to cover Viagra and deny coverage for birth control.

Contraceptive Equity provides women with critical access to birth control they might not otherwise be able to afford, thereby preventing unintended pregnancies and reducing the need for abortion. This is basic health care and insurance plans should cover it — just like they cover other prescription drugs.

Yet, Union Pacific deliberately chose to exclude coverage of prescription contraceptives from its health care plan. And now, in a decision made public on March 15, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit has decided to let them get away with it. This decision is yet another example of women being denied access to contraception.

We need leaders and elected officials to help solve our nation's problems, not add to them. The first step should be passage of the Prescription Contraception Equity Act (HB 316 & SB 38), introduced in the Pennsylvania House and Senate by Representative Daylin Leach and Senator Connie Williams, respectively. This state legislation would ensure equitable coverage of prescription contraceptive drugs and devices and the medical and counseling services necessary for their effective use.

Contact your state legislators today and urge them to co-sponsor the Prescription Contraception Equity Act. For more information, contact the Public Affairs Department at (215) 351-5510.

Upcoming Events: Mark your Calendars!

- Community Outreach/Tabling Training at PPSP, 1144 Locust Street
Wednesday, April 11th - 5:30-8:30pm
- Volunteer Appreciation Week: April 15th - 21st
- Dining Out for Life, Montgomery County
Thursday, April 26th
Visit www.diningoutforlife.com for a list of participating restaurants.
- Activist Training, Swarthmore Public Library
Saturday, April 28th - 10:30-2:30pm

To RSVP or for information about these or other PPSP events, contact the Public Affairs Department at publicaffairs@ppsp.org or (215) 351-5585.