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MISSOURI HOUSE EMBRACES WRONG PRIORITIES **Legislators ignore prevention legislation while passing 2nd anti-abortion measure**

Jefferson City, MO - Today, the Missouri House of Representatives voted to pass HCS HB 46 & 434 (Davis/Pratt), the Abortion Restriction Bill of 2009. Planned Parenthood affiliates in Missouri denounce this bill as an effort to further mandate government intrusion between doctor and patient, while doing nothing to reduce abortion.

As the nation's leading advocate and provider of reproductive health services, Planned Parenthood knows that comprehensive sex education and birth control are the best tools for preventing unintended pregnancy and reducing the need for abortion. We are calling on our elected officials to put aside their differences, pass prevention legislation like the *Prevention First Act* and put the health of women and families first.

While anti-abortion Missouri legislators have spent 5 of just 33 legislative days debating abortion, Missouri's [unemployment rate is at a 25-year high](#). There are over 750,000 uninsured Missourians including 146,150 uninsured children. [[Kaiser Family Foundation](#)] Missouri's teen birth rate went up 6% in 2006 compared to a national average increase of 4%. [[Guttmacher Institute](#)] Missouri ranks among the top 15 states for sexually transmitted diseases – with St. Louis rating first in the nation for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia. [[CDC](#)] By contrast, Missouri has one of the lower abortion rates in the nation – ranking the 8th lowest state in the nation. [[Guttmacher Institute](#)]

Rather than focus on the state's priorities, the Missouri House voted to add [six new dangerous and unnecessary sections](#) to Missouri's already extensive body of laws restricting abortion.

Under current state law, any woman seeking an abortion must sign a consent form stating her decision is completely free and voluntary and then wait at least twenty-four hours before having an abortion. No state funds or public facilities can be used to provide abortions, unless to save a woman's life or in cases of rape and incest, insurance companies are prohibited from offering abortion coverage as part of their regular benefits package and minors must have parental consent before having an abortion.

Meanwhile the following 10 prevention bills languish with no legislative action:

[SB 260/HB 520](#) Compassionate Assistance for Rape Emergencies, [HB 413](#) Cancer Screening Coverage, [SB 316](#) Comprehensive Sex Education, [SB 329](#) Prevention First Act, [HB 342](#) Prostate Research Development, [HB 370](#) Expedited Partner Therapy, [HB 430](#) Uterine Fibroids Information, [SB 203/HB 584](#) Patient Protection at Pharmacies.

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Planned Parenthood affiliates in Missouri serve more than 71,000 women, men and teens annually with education, family planning, and disease testing and prevention services.