

The Denver Women's Commission voted to endorse the following bills at their March 5, 2009 meeting:

SB 225 – Birth Control Protection Act – by Sen. Boyd and Rep. McGihon

This bill defines contraception as any medically acceptable drug, device or procedure used to prevent pregnancy. This is applied to statutes including insurance, employee benefits, Medicaid, Child Health Plan, etc. The benefit of this bill is to remove from debate that such birth control methods as the pill, IUDs and the “morning after” pill are birth control methods as they act prior to implantation of a fertilized egg (pregnancy). Some legislators argue that any method which acts after the sperm meet the egg is abortion by their own definition.

SB 159 – Dependent Coverage to an Unmarried Child - by Sen. Sandoval & Rep. McGihon

This bill would allow parents to have an adult unmarried child living at home on their health insurance policy until age 30, rather than age 25. Insurers can offer this cover at an additional premium, by rider or supplemental policy. The policy holder (employer) can (and would likely) pass the additional premium cost onto the parent.

Young adults 19-29 are the group most likely to be uninsured. Among children under 18 11% are uninsured; 30% of those 19-29 are uninsured. Many have no insurance because they are in jobs with no benefits, or are unemployed. Parents who are willing and able to cover their adult children reduce the financial burden and cost shift from the expenses of treating uninsured.

SB 228 – Flexibility to Use State Revenues – Senator Morse & Rep. Marostica

This bill would eliminate the Bird-Arveschoug 6% budget formula. It would not affect total allowable state revenues under TABOR. It would not change tax rates. It would allow elected officials to make spending decisions about available revenue rather than use this formula which earmarks all revenue above 6% above last year's State general fund spending for transportation and capitol construction.

Particularly problematic is how the 6% will interact with Federal Stimulus money. If the 6% provision stays in place, using federal recovery dollars to replace general fund spending on programs will make the cuts permanent. This would be because the 6% year to year increase is applied to the State general fund only, not including federal dollars. Many of these services and programs offer critical support for women and their families, particularly in hard times. Rigid formulas interfere with effective governance.

