

UW Birth Control Ban AB 343

LeMahieu's bill would prohibit anyone from advertising, prescribing or dispensing birth control anywhere on UW property. This bill needlessly puts women's lives at risk, interferes with the patient-physician relationship, abridges women's constitutional right to access birth control and infers that adult women cannot be trusted to control their own fertility!

AB 434 will Ban Doctors from Dispensing Birth Control at all University of Wisconsin Health Services and UW Hospitals

- This legislation prohibits UW health care providers from *prescribing* and *dispensing* "emergency contraception." However, the bill makes an illogical distinction between emergency contraception (EC) and birth control pills.
- The hormones in EC work just like those in regular birth control pills—the two act identically in method and pharmacology.
- A 2002 study shows that the most common way EC stops pregnancy is by preventing ovulation. (*Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 2002).
- This bill will prohibit UW doctors from dispensing all birth control pills to patients, including non-students who use UW Hospital services.

AB 343 is an Obvious Retreat from Previous Statements Made by Rep. LeMahieu, Calling for a Ban on all Birth Control, in Response to Overwhelming Public Opposition

- Le Mahieu's original press release stated: "*LeMahieu has begun working on legislation aimed at preventing schools within the UW system from providing young college women with prescription birth control.*"
- The slightly amended language in AB 343 is a veiled attempt to look like a prohibition on a particular kind of birth control.
- In effect, the bill will be more far reaching and LeMahieu's original intent will be enacted. This is an obvious attack on basic birth control.
- This bill will greatly increase the incidence of unintended pregnancies and abortions for UW students.

Emergency Contraception Prevents Unintended Pregnancies

- Studies show that women need increased access to and information about EC.
 - A 2003 national survey demonstrated that while over 60% of women know there is something out there to prevent pregnancies after unprotected sex, only 6% report ever using EC.

This information was share with you by the Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health.

*For more information about legislation related to reproductive health or to support women's health contact WAWH at
PO Box 1726 • Madison, WI 53701 • (608) 251-0139 or toll-free (800) 300-WAWH • info@wiawh.org •
www.supportwomenshealth.org.*

Fact Sheet

- Women are still unsure about the availability, effectiveness and safety of EC. There is a great need for improved access and education by health care providers. It is the responsibility of University Health Care providers to help young women prevent unintended pregnancy.
- Women deserve a second chance to prevent unintended pregnancies.
 - EC is basic birth control. It is simply a high dose of birth control pills that prevent pregnancy up to 120 hours after unprotected sex.
 - If taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex, EC is at least 75% effective in preventing unintended pregnancy. Plan B, approved by the FDA in 1999, is specifically designed and packaged to use as EC. It has an 89% success rate in preventing pregnancies if taken within 72 hours of unprotected.

Widespread Use of EC has the Potential to Reduce Unintended Pregnancies by 50%

Birth Control is Basic Health Care. Women Deserve the Opportunity to Protect Themselves from the Risks of Unintended Pregnancies

Access to Emergency Contraception Does Not Increase Unprotected Sex or Promote Promiscuity

- Having EC on hand does not make young women more likely to have unprotected sex or to disregard their regular contraceptive method, according to the Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology, 2004.
- The same study found that when young women had ready access to EC, they were more likely to use EC and use it sooner (within the first 12 hours when it is *most* effective).
- Anti-reproductive health proponents' claims about women's use of EC lack scientific merit. Women of all ages deserve access to a second chance for birth control.

The Public Overwhelmingly Supports Access to Emergency Contraception

- A 2004 poll shows that over 70% of Wisconsin voters support access to EC for all women.
- Countless medical organizations, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Medical Association support widespread access to EC as a means of reducing unintended pregnancies.