

On my mind this month...



Gail Yamner

The May 16th House vote to reauthorize The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was the latest salvo in the war against women being waged by GOP extremists and joined by colleagues who fear their power.

The Senate passed VAWA recently by a vote of 68 to 31. The bipartisan Senate bill included protections for immigrant women, women on Indian reservations and LGBT couples. The House offered its own bill minus those provisions and with additions that would hinder the mission of VAWA.

VAWA is subject to reauthorization every five years. Since its inception in 1994, VAWA has easily passed both houses of Congress, often including added protections as new needs were identified. The House bill reverses that tradition. House objectors say the Senate bill would lead to more immigration fraud. But anti-immigrant hostility does not explain why opponents gutted existing protections for women on college campuses and added requirements that hinder service providers from reaching victims.

VAWA has reduced domestic violence by as much as 50%. VAWA programs help local and state agencies investigate and prosecute domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking; they provide legal and other services to victims.

Although we could not stop the assault, thank you calls should be made to those who bucked party pressure and voted the right way. The roll call vote can be found at <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2012/roll258.xml>. These calls can be important when committees meet to reconcile the bills. Call 202-225-3121. Your pressure saves lives.

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Israel

Last week, the new head of Israel's Kadima party, Shaul Mofaz, joined with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to form a national unity government. The move adds 28 Kadima Knesset members to the ruling coalition, increasing the current government's tally to 94 of the Knesset's 120 seats. Mofaz will become vice prime minister, a member of the inner security cabinet, and a minister-without-portfolio. Israeli elections will now be pushed forward to October 2013, the end of the full four and a half year term.

At a joint press conference on May 8, Netanyahu and Mofaz announced the fourfold focus of the new government: drafting new legislation to replace the Tal Law that exempts the ultraorthodox from military service; proposing changes to the electoral system in time for the 2013 election; passing a new budget; and advancing a "responsible" peace process with the Palestinians. According to David Makovsky of the Washington Institute, "the most immediate impact of the deal will likely be decreased influence by the ultraorthodox Haredim." A rewrite of the Tal Law started to take shape almost immediately.

The *Jerusalem Post* reported that under the Mofaz-Netanyahu deal, all Israelis either would serve in the military or do national service in a variety of fields, among them education, health and domestic security. Those who fail to comply would be barred from receiving state funding. Under the Tal law, haredi men must stay in yeshiva until their 30s to keep their military exemption. Religious women are granted exemptions upon request. Changing the rule would move haredim into the workforce. That would help Israel's tax rolls, help integrate the ultraorthodox into Israeli society and reduce the haredi community's dependence on welfare. Iran was not discussed at the May 8th press conference, but Mofaz has publicly suggested that he does not

(Israel, continued on page two)

United States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

The United States House of Representatives has been chipping away at women's reproductive rights for the past twenty-five years. To a certain extent, the Senate has been a firewall and some of the House-passed anti-choice legislation has never made it to the Senate floor. Also, during the Clinton administration and the current Obama administration, any anti-choice legislation that passed both houses of Congress was subject to Presidential veto.

Many states have tried, both successfully and unsuccessfully, to legislate restrictions that the federal government has not imposed. The following information, from the Guttmacher Institute, summarizes these state laws.

Refusal:

- 46 states allow individual health care providers to refuse to participate in an abortion.
- 43 states allow institutions to refuse to perform abortions; 16 limit refusal to private or religious institutions.

State-Mandated Counseling:

19 states mandate that women be given pre-abortion "counseling" on at least one of the following (which may be scientifically discredited, questionable or unproven):

- the purported link between abortion and breast cancer - 5 states
- the ability of a fetus to feel pain - 11 states
- long-term mental health issues for the woman - 7 states
- the availability of ultrasound - 11 states.

Waiting Periods:

- 26 states require a waiting period, usually 24 hours, between counseling and procedure.
- 9 of these states require the woman to make two separate trips to the clinic to obtain the procedure.

Parental Involvement:

- 37 states require some type of

(Reproductive Rights, continued on page two)

Research & Races

2012 SENATE ELECTIONS

The primary season is in full swing. JAC is already involved in many Senate and House races with incumbents running for re-election and in open seats or challenger contests in states where the primaries are over. At stake in this election are a reduction in US aid to Israel, additional restrictions on women's reproductive freedom, more prayer in schools, and expansion of science-defying curricula and textbooks that support creationism and deny the existence of global warming.

It is imperative for the PAC and individual JAC members to make commitments to members of Congress and challengers who stand up for our shared values. We will be sending profiles of priority candidates soon..

JAC is currently in the following races and will be in more as primaries take place.

SENATE		
State	JAC-supported	Opponent
CA	Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D)	Opponent to be decided June 5
DE	Sen. Tom Carper (D)	Opponent to be decided Sept. 11
FL	Sen. Bill Nelson (D)	Opponent to be decided Aug. 14

MD	Sen. Ben Cardin (D)	Daniel Bongino (R)
MA	Elizabeth Warren (D)	Sen. Scott Brown (R)
MI	Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D)	Opponent to be decided Aug. 7
MN	Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D)	Opponent to be decided Aug. 14
MO	Sen. Claire McCaskill (D)	Opponent to be decided Aug. 7
MT	Sen. Jon Tester (D)	Rep. Dennis Rehberg (R)
NV	Rep. Shelley Berkley (D)	Sen. Dean Heller (R)
NJ	Sen. Bob Menendez (D)	Opponent to be decided June 5
NM	Rep. Martin Heinrich (D)	Heather Wilson (R)
NY	Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D)	Opponent to be decided June 26
OH	Sen. Sherrod Brown (D)	Josh Mandel (R)
RI	Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D)	Opponent to be decided Sept. 11
VA	Gov. Tim Kaine (D)	George Allen (R)
WA	Sen. Maria Cantwell (D)	Opponent to be decided Aug. 7
WI	Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D)	Opponent to be decided Aug. 14

HOUSE		
AZ 8	Ron Barber (D)	Special election June 12 to complete term of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords.
CA 53	Rep. Susan Davis (D)	Nick Popaditch (R)
CO 1	Rep. Diana DeGette (D)	Opponent to be decided June 26
IL 2	Rep. Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D)	Brian Woodworth (R)
IL 8	Tammy Duckworth (D)	Rep. Joe Walsh (R)
IL 9	Rep. Jan Shaskowsky (D)	Timothy Wolfe (R)
IL 10	Brad Schneider (D)	Rep. Robert Dold (R)
IL 17	Cheri Bustos (D)	Rep. Bobby Schilling (R)
IA 4	Christie Vilsack (D)	Rep. Steve King (R)
MI 9	Rep. Sander Levin (D)	Opponent to be decided Aug. 7
MI 14	Rep. Gary Peters (D)	Rep. Hansen Clarke (D)
NJ 3	Shelley Adler (D)	Rep. Jon Runyan (R)
OH 16	Rep. Betty Sutton (D)	Rep. Jim Renacci (R)
PA 8	Kathy Boockvar (D)	Rep. Mike Fitzpatrick (R)

Reproductive Rights, continued from page one

parental involvement in a minor's decision to have an abortion.

- 22 require one or both parents to consent, of which 11 require that one or both be notified.
- 4 states require both consent and notification.

"Partial-Birth" Abortion: 18 states prohibit "partial-birth" abortion; 3 apply only to post-viability abortions.

Gestational Limits: 40 states prohibit abortions, except when necessary to

protect the woman's life or health, after a specified point in pregnancy, most often fetal viability.

Public Funding:

- 17 states use their own funds to pay for medically necessary abortions for Medicaid enrollees in the state.
- 32 states and DC prohibit the use of state funds with exceptions for life endangerment or rape and incest. South Dakota limits funding to cases of life endangerment only.

Coverage by Private Insurance:

- 8 states restrict coverage of abortion. Most states allow the purchase of additional abortion coverage at additional cost.

Physician/Hospital Requirements:

- 39 states require an abortion to be performed by a licensed physician.
- 21 states require an abortion to be performed in a hospital after a specified point in the pregnancy.

The JAC website www.jacpac.org has monthly updates on anti-choice laws.

Israel, continued from page one

favor a unilateral Israeli attack at this time. He has said in the past that an Israeli strike was an option that could not be discounted. The new coalition also means that Defense Minister Ehud Barak will retain his position until the 2013 elections. Barak has been a leading advocate of an Israeli strike. On the peace process, Kadima's

inclusion should give Netanyahu more room to maneuver and allow some gestures favored by Palestinian prime minister Salam Fayyad. Kadima has lobbied against West Bank settlement expansion, advocating that construction be limited to existing settlement blocs adjacent to the pre-1967 borders. Palestinian Authority President

Mahmoud Abbas continues to reject Netanyahu's proposals to resume negotiations without preconditions. Abbas' latest demands call for a halt to all Israeli settlement construction on land captured in the 1967 war, the release of Palestinian prisoners, and a resumption of negotiations based on 1967 lines.