



New York State Pro-Life Reporter

An update of abortion-related legislative activity
in the 2007-2008 New York State Legislative Session.

RHAPP SURVIVES ELIOT SPITZER

On Monday, March 10, New York Governor Eliot Spitzer was publicly named as a client in a prostitution ring. With the scandal swirling around him, he resigned from office two days later, his resignation taking effect on March 17.

Today, Eliot Spitzer may be a former Governor of New York State, but his dangerous “Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection” (RHAPP) Act lives on. The bill, S.5829 (sponsored by the Senate Rules Committee) and S.6045-A (sponsored by a number of Senate Democrats – see story page 2), remains in the Senate Health Committee. Committee members are listed in a separate article in this newsletter. If your State Senator is a member, please be sure to send a letter of opposition regarding this bill.

The RHAPP bill still has not been introduced in the Assembly. On February 13, 2008, 10 members of the Assembly from the

Democratic Majority signed a letter to Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, urging him not to advance the bill. They were:

Michael Benjamin	Mark Schroeder
Dov Hikind	Michael Cusick
Anthony Seminerio	Darrel Aubertine
Francine DelMonte	Karim Camara
Dennis Gabryszak	Robert Reilly

Each and every one of these members deserves a note of thanks. If your Assembly representative is among them, please drop him/her a note of appreciation. Such thanks is most welcome and virtually priceless when it comes from constituents. Remember that Darrel Aubertine is now a State Senator, having won a special election in late February, so be sure to send his note to the Senate mailing address noted on page 3.

DAVID PATERSON SWORN IN AS 55TH GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK STATE

On March 17, 2008, David Paterson, former Lt. Governor and former Senate Minority Leader, was sworn in as Governor of New York State.



While he was in the State Senate, he built up a strong record in favor of abortion-on-demand. He consistently voted against restrictions on taxpayer funding of abortion. On two occasions, in 1999 and again in 2000, Mr. Paterson voted against a ban on partial-birth abortions. In 2002 he voted against the

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Unborn Victims of Violence Act, a bill to allow criminal charges to be brought for the death of an unborn child outside the context of abortion. And in 2005 he voted in favor of legislation to allow over-the-counter access to the morning-after pill for females of any age.

In recognition of this record, the Family Planning Advocates of New York State (FPA), the lobbying arm of Planned Parenthood, gave him their "Margaret Sanger Award."

Governor Paterson was a prime mover in former-Governor Spitzer's stem cell research initiative, which will spend \$600 million in state taxpayer dollars over ten years for stem cell research projects, primarily those involving embryo-destructive research.

According to his spokesperson, Governor Paterson also supports the extreme "Reproductive Health and Privacy Protection Act." It remains to be seen whether he will make the bill a priority in this legislative session.

PATERSON AFFIRMS PLANNED PARENTHOOD ON MARCH 10, 2008

On Monday, March 10, one week before his swearing-in as Governor of New York State, David Paterson addressed the annual conference of the Family Planning Advocates of New York State (FPA). (Eliot Spitzer had originally been scheduled to give the address.)

According to *The Legislative Gazette* newspaper (March 17, 2008), the then-Lt. Governor said to the abortion advocates:

"Don't let anyone slander your ranks by trying to suggest that the fight for reproductive rights for women is some sort of 'special service.' All it is, is the embodiment and the embrace of what our state and federal Constitution intended for

all citizens but has been subjugated and in many ways changed so as not to suit half of the population."

On March 17, JoAnn M. Smith, president and CEO of FPA, released this statement: "Governor Paterson is a man who stands up for what he believes in. He believes that personal reproductive health care decisions should be made by women. He believes that young people should have access to medically accurate sex education." FPA and New York's Planned Parenthood clinics expressed their confidence in the new Governor because of his support for "reproductive health and rights," otherwise known as abortion.

NEW SPONSORS ADDED ON RHAPP – ACTION NEEDED!

On March 7, the following Democratic members of the State Senate added their names as sponsors on the Democrats' version of the extreme abortion bill, now numbered S.6045-A and originally sponsored only by Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins:

Eric Adams	Kevin Parker
Neil Breslin	Bill Perkins
Martin Connor	John Sabini
Thomas Duane	Diane Savino
Ruth Hassell-Thompson	Eric Schneiderman
Shirley Huntley	Jose Serrano
Craig Johnson	Malcolm Smith

Liz Krueger	Toby Stavisky
Velmanette Montgomery	Antoine Thompson

If your State Senator is listed here, please contact him or her immediately and ask them to remove their name from this extreme measure. Urge your friends, neighbors and co-workers to do the same. The more the Senators hear displeasure from their constituents, the more likely they are to disassociate themselves from this radical abortion plan.

Contact information is on the following page. Tell them they are not representing YOU.

SEX EDUCATION BILL PASSES ASSEMBLY

On Monday, March 17, the New York State Assembly passed the so-called “Healthy Teens Act,” A.2856, by a vote of 130 to 14. This bill would establish a new state funding stream for Planned Parenthood to come into school classrooms to promote artificial contraceptive use and abortion.



Similar bills have passed the Assembly for the past three years, but they have never been voted on by the State Senate.

The 14 Assembly members who voted against the bill were: Daniel Burling, Marc Butler, Joseph Errigo, Gary Finch, Michael Fitzpatrick, Dennis Gabryszak, Joe Giglio, Steve Hawley, Thomas Kirwan, Brian Kolb, Peter Lopez, Bill Reilich, Robin Schimminger, and Louis Tobacco. They deserve thanks from their constituents.

In the Senate, the bill is numbered S.1342 by Senator George Winner (R –Elmira) and it sits

in the Senate Health Committee. In 2007, the bill was favorably reported by the Senate Health Committee to the Senate Finance Committee. We need to ensure that the bill stays in Committee in the Senate. Please write today to the members of the Senate Health Committee to urge that they oppose S.1342.

Chairman: Kemp Hannon (R – Garden City)
Hugh Farley (R – Schenectady)
Tom Libous (R – Binghamton)
John DeFrancisco (R – Syracuse)
Bill Larkin (R – New Windsor)
Charles Fuschillo (R – Freeport)
Mary Lou Rath (R – Erie)
George Winner (R – Elmira)
Betty Little (R – Glens Falls)
Cathy Young (R – Olean)
John Sampson (D – Brooklyn)
Velmanette Montgomery (D – Brooklyn)
George Onorato (D – Queens)
Thomas Duane (D – NYC)
Efrain Gonzalez (D – Bronx)
Eric Schneiderman (D – Bronx)
David Valesky (D – Syracuse)

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR STATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Members of the Senate...

Honorable (name)
New York State Senate
Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12247
518-455-2800 (Senate Switchboard)
www.senate.state.ny.us

Members of the Assembly...

Honorable (name)
New York State Assembly
Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12248
518-455-4100 (Assembly Switchboard)
www.assembly.state.ny.us

The Governor...

Honorable David A. Paterson
Governor, New York State
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224
518-474-8390
www.ny.gov/governor

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

If you haven't already done so, we invite you to join the Catholic Advocacy Network. Together, we can speak out in support of the poor and vulnerable, the sick and elderly, the unborn, children and families. Taking action requires no more than a phone call, letter, or email to your legislators. Through the Internet, we will provide you with sample letters to elected representatives, and the ability to contact your legislators from there with just a few clicks of a mouse. Citizen advocacy has never been so simple!

There is **no cost** to join. Just go to www.nyscatholic.org and click “Join the Network.” At www.nyscatholic.org, a pre-written letter opposing RHAPP is already there, waiting for you to sign and send to your elected officials. Take Action Now!

Utica Observer-Dispatch, March 24, 2008

Let abortion bill die in committee

AT ISSUE: Spitzer's program bill needs to go away like he did

"A bill ratcheting up abortion strongly supported by former Gov. Eliot Spitzer is quite likely to go away with him.

State legislators need to make sure that it does.

The proposal is commonly referred to as the Reproductive Health & Privacy Protection Act (RHAPP). It was introduced as a governor's program bill before Spitzer's resigned, but remains in the Senate, where it has sat in the health committee since Jan. 9. If committee members decide not to move it, it'll die there at the end of the session.

Death would be appropriate for this terrible bill. Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-Rome, who opposes it, says Spitzer's reasoning behind the measure was to further strengthen New York's abortion laws in the wake of last year's United States Supreme Court decision to uphold the federal Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. Such a measure would be significant if Roe v. Wade ever was overturned, and abortion law was left to the states.

RHAPP is a horrendous bill. It states that abortions may be performed by "a qualified, licensed health care practitioner," but is not clear whether those abortion providers need to be physicians, what type of training is necessary or what kind of license they need. "Qualified licensed health care practitioner," defined by Public Health Law, could include anybody from chiropractors and dentists to nurses and occupational therapists.

The bill also would remove New York's abortion-related laws from the criminal code and place them in the public-health law. That would rule out any possibility of criminal prosecution for botched jobs, and essentially make abortion immune from state regulation. Among other things, that means parental notification could not be required before performing abortions on minors.

Furthermore, the New York State Catholic Conference (NYSCC) fears that the act might be used to require health insurance to cover abortions, force doctors to perform abortions, and even compel hospitals, including Roman Catholic facilities, to permit abortions.

This bill needs to die in committee, and it's the responsibility of lawmakers to see that it does. More important, perhaps is our own responsibility to keep our daughters from ever facing this "choice" in the first place. That means teaching them to appreciate the sanctity of human life.

Our belief that every life is sacred must be relayed to the next generation through our words and our deeds. And we cannot possibly hope to convey that message by condoning abortion. When we talk to our children about abortion, we must be clear: There are right choices and wrong choices. Abortion is the wrong choice."

Letters of appreciation for this excellent piece can be addressed to:

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