



## This Week at the Montana Legislature March 14, 2021

### So, here's the thing...

We've known for a long time that some elected officials are intimidated by us and by the 70,000+ of you who support us. We know that some of them prefer to spend their time attacking reproductive rights rather than fighting for Montana's families, access to health care, support for essential workers... the list of worthy possibilities goes on! And we know that some of them show up every two years like clockwork to introduce the same anti-PP bills again and again. But we're still somehow surprised at the level of *obsession* that some of these legislators have with Planned Parenthood during the 67th legislative session. From abortion access to sex education to a Title X program that we haven't been a part of since 2018, they can't seem to get enough of us.

*Join us this week in reminding your representatives that they have important work to do — and obsessing over Planned Parenthood of Montana and the important health services that we provide isn't it.*

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**Take Action**

## Help us to protect Sex Ed in Montana — tell House Education Committee members to vote No on Senate Bill 99

Although [Sen. Cary Smith's SB 99](#) was amended in the Senate to remove the problematic 'opt-in' requirement, one glaring issue remains — the attempt to bar abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood of Montana from providing sex education resources to Montana schools. We alluded to it up above but Sen. Smith has actually attempted this bill several times in the past and has always been clear about his intent: *to target Planned Parenthood*.

[You can email the House Education Committee members here](#), or you can leave them a message by calling the Legislative Information Desk at **406-444-4800**. The desk is available to take calls weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the very friendly staff are always happy to answer your questions!

### Write a Letter to the Editor!

We don't have to tell you how important it is to show widespread support for Planned Parenthood and your opposition to dangerous bills such as SB 99. Calling and emailing our legislators at the Capitol is absolutely crucial, and so is speaking out within our communities. Submitting an LTE to your local newspaper is very easy and we're happy to look over your draft, help you put something together, or offer any support you need. Drop us a line at [info@ppamt.org](mailto:info@ppamt.org) and let's get started!

Interested in further fighting bills like SB 99 and getting involved? [Sign-up to volunteer](#)

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## This Week

[SB 99: Prohibiting abortion providers from offering education by Sen. Cary Smith \(R\), Senate District 27](#), as amended, would ban the use of educational resources offered by abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood of Montana. Comprehensive sex education covers everything from birth control and abstinence to STD prevention and safe, healthy relationships. Our young people must have every opportunity to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy decisions. Last week we told you this bill would be heard in House Education Committee just a few days later but the next morning they rescheduled it to this week. SB 99 will now be heard in the

House Education Committee on Monday morning at 8 a.m. A big thanks to our current and former Teen Council members who will be providing important testimony against this bill! **[Call or message committee members](#) and tell them to vote No on SB 99.**

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## Coming Soon

**[SB 315: Adopt the Born-Alive Infant Protection Act by Sen. David Howard \(R\), Senate District 29](#)**, is the policy bill version of **[HB 167](#)**, which we previously opposed. As a reminder, House Bill 167 would place anti-abortion language on the next general election ballot and leave it up to Montanans to vote for or against our constitutional right to abortion and personal privacy. Because SB 315 is a regular policy bill, it is up to legislators to decide if this false, stigmatizing, anti-abortion narrative should be made law. *This bill will be heard next Tuesday, March 23 in House Judiciary Committee.*

**[HB 229: Prohibiting health insurance plans offered through the Health Insurance Exchange from covering abortion services by Rep. Jane Gillette \(R\), House District 64](#)**, would mean that people who rely on the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Exchange would not have any options to get coverage for abortion. Banning this coverage from Exchange plans would place safe, legal abortion out of reach for the lowest income families in Montana. This bill was assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee *more than a month ago* but still hasn't had its hearing scheduled. *Follow our social media channels — [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) — for updates on this HB 229's movement!*

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## Legislation We're Watching

**[SB 215: Religious Freedom Restoration Act by Sen. Carl Glimm \(R\), Senate District 2](#)**, would allow any person, corporation, or other entity to use religion as an excuse to discriminate against and harm others. Examples of this bill's dangerous potential include a religiously-affiliated school firing a teacher for becoming pregnant while not married, an employer justifying racial discrimination, a pharmacy refusing to fill birth control prescriptions, or a school counselor refusing to help a gay student. As members of the Free & Fair Coalition, we are joining with partner organizations to fight this baseless attack that would have an outsized impact on

LGBTQ+ Montanans. This bill was heard on Thursday morning in House Judiciary Committee. **Please call or [message committee members](#) and tell them to vote No on this shameful attempt to legalize discrimination.** Keep an eye on our social media channels for information on how this bill is moving through the process.

**[HB 112: Require interscholastic athletes to participate under sex assigned at birth by Rep. John Fuller \(R\), House District 8](#)**, would ban transgender athletes from participating in sports in Montana public schools. The bill was passed in the House well over a month ago and will eventually be heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee. We'll keep you updated!

**[HB 427: Provide for youth health protection by John Fuller \(R\), House District 8](#)**, is the reincarnation of House Bill 113 — the anti-trans bill that prohibits surgical care for trans, non-binary, or Two-Spirit youth in Montana. This is yet another attempt by legislators to insert themselves into the personal, private health care decisions. It has passed out of the House and was assigned to Senate Judiciary Committee almost a month ago but still doesn't have a hearing date set.

House Bills [136](#), [140](#), [167](#), and [171](#) passed out of the Senate a couple weeks ago. HBs 136, 140, and 171 will soon head to the Governor's desk for his signature. If he signs them, they will be made law and added to the Montana Code Annotated. Because HB 167 was amended in the Senate, it heads back to the House for them to approve the changes. The Montanan Reproductive Rights Coalition, which PPAMT leads, will be submitting veto requests to the Governor's office just as we have in the past when anti-reproductive health bills have passed out of both legislative chambers.

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**Questions about these bills or how you can help us fight them? [Contact Julia!](#)**

Visit our website.

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