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Hart Introduces Legislation to Ban Schools from Providing the ‘Morning-After Pill’ to Minors

Schools providing the contraceptive would lose federal funding

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Melissa Hart (PA-04) today introduced legislation that would block federal funding to schools that provide the “morning-after pill” to schoolchildren.

“Students who can’t even get an aspirin without parental permission can receive a pill to abort a pregnancy,” Hart said. “This is both inconsistent and inappropriate. My legislation reaffirms that parents, not schools, are the primary decision makers in children’s lives.”

Hart’s bill would block federal funding to public schools that distribute the “morning-after pill” to girls under 18. According to the Congressional Research Service, as of April 2000, over 180 schools across the country offered the “morning-after pill” at school-based clinics.

Under current law, a school receiving federal funds designated for family planning is authorized to distribute the “morning-after pill.” Since federal laws and regulations overrule state parental consent and notifications laws, school nurses can distribute the “morning-after pill” without a parent’s knowledge or consent.

The “morning-after pill” is a high dosage of artificially manufactured progesterone, estrogen or a combination of these steroids. It may be taken after sexual intercourse over a period of three days to achieve the goal of preventing or ending a pregnancy.

Hart noted that while the “morning-after pill” was approved for use by

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the Food and Drug Administration in 1997, there are still many risks associated with it, including heart problems, strokes and blood clots.

“I don’t think it is smart public policy or ethically acceptable to allow our 13 and 14 year-old daughters to get potentially dangerous medications with publicly-funded school dollars, and without their parents even knowing about it,” Hart added. “The role of our schools is to educate and nourish our children as they grow, not to act as family planning counselors.”

The legislation now goes to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

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