

Oklahoma State Senate

April 26, 2010

Senate Review by Gary Stanislowski

We're now into the 13th week of session with a little over a month to go. We completed our floor action on House bills last week and will now turn our attention to conference committee and the budget.

The Governor has signed several of the bills that I'm the principal author on or am coauthoring.

HB 2566 is the annual appropriation of federal Reed Act Distribution funds for Oklahoma Employment Security Commission programs. The total appropriation is approximately \$11 million, about \$4.5 million for the Employment Service Program and \$6.5 million for the Unemployment Insurance Program, to be used before December 31, 2011. No state dollars are being used to fund this program. The money came from employers in our state that pay unemployment insurance to the federal government and some of those dollars have come back to our state.

SB 2051 prohibits a dental plan of a health benefit plan from dictating the fee a dentist may charge a patient for a procedure that is not covered by the plan. In other words, dental insurance plans may not dictate to dentists the prices that they may charge on procedures that are not covered by the plan.

HB 3075 requires facilities that perform non life-threatening abortions to post a sign outside stating: "Notice: It is against the law for anyone, regardless of his or her relationship to you, to force you to have an abortion. By law, we cannot perform, induce, prescribe for, or provide you with the means for an abortion unless we have your freely given and voluntary consent. It is against the law to perform, induce, prescribe for, or provide you with the means for an abortion against your

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will. You have the right to contact any local or state law enforcement agency to receive protection from any actual or threatened physical abuse or violence.”

Finally, it requires physicians to inform minors who wish to have an abortion that the minor can't be forced into having an abortion and that only through her consent can the abortion be performed. Consent must be certified in writing stating that she was informed by the doctor of her options.

Yesterday the Senate voted to overturn the Governor's veto of HB 2780 which will require an obstetric ultrasound at least one hour prior to an abortion. The physician will have to explain the ultrasound depiction. The pregnant woman would not have to view the ultrasound, but simply verify that the doctor performed the ultrasound.

The Senate also overturned the Governor's veto on HB 2656 which will create a new law stating that in a wrongful life action or a wrongful birth action, no damages may be recovered for any condition that existed at the time of a child's birth if the claim is that the defendant's act or omission contributed to the mother's not having obtained an abortion.