

US FORUM CONNECTION #85, JANUARY 2011

This publication is intended for your information about issues important to education, women and children. Use of the information included here is up to each individual.

This free newsletter is sponsored by the United States Forum of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International is an organization of leading women educators with over 100,000 members. Delta Kappa Gamma members wishing to subscribe to this FREE newsletter should send a request to Angela.Bedenbaugh@usm.edu. We urge you to share this newsletter with other interested individuals who are not members of Delta Kappa Gamma or members who do not subscribe to this publication. This publication is intended for your information about issues important to education, women and children..

FREE TAX PREPARATION SERVICE FUNDING CUTS AFFECTING EDUCATION FEMALE DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT HEART FOR WOMEN ACT

FREE TAX PREPARATION SERVICE

The IRS sponsors the VITA program, which offers free tax help for families earning around \$49,000 or less, and, in partnership with AARP, the Tax Aide program, which assists elderly tax filers in communities around the country. In addition, the military coordinates VITA services. Many VITA or Tax Aide sites offer e-filing, which allows families to receive their refunds even faster. For more information call [1-800-906-9887](tel:1-800-906-9887) or go to <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=107626,00.html>.

FUNDING CUTS AFFECTING EDUCATION

The recently introduced H.R. 1 will strip over \$1 billion from Head Start and child care assistance, which keeps children learning and women earning, leaving 368,000 children without early learning support. Additionally this bill would slash funding for Pell grants, essential to helping low-income people afford college, amounting to a loss of more than \$800 per student. It also eliminates the Women's Educational Equity program, which helps schools comply with Title IX, the law that prohibits sex discrimination in federally funded education programs. Plus, it blocks the Department of Education from implementing regulations intended to ensure that for-profit colleges provide quality education and do not prey on vulnerable students for their financial aid dollars.

H.R. 1 also cuts funding for prenatal care and maternal and child health, education, job training, community health services, assistance for the elderly, Social Security offices, housing, food safety, environmental protection, and more.

FEMALE DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) has signed an amicus friend of the court brief in support of the plaintiffs in *Dukes v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.* On March 29, 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral argument to determine whether the case can move forward as a class action. AAUW one of 34 groups to sign the brief will also provide financial support through its Legal Advocacy Fund to defray the expenses of six of the lead plaintiffs. For more information go to <http://aauw.org/act/laf/cases/DukesWalMart.cfm>.

HEART FOR WOMEN ACT

The Heart disease Education, Research and Analysis, and Treatment (HEART) for Women Act S438 would make sure that healthcare data reported to the federal government is classified by gender, race and ethnicity. It would also require the U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary to submit an annual report to Congress on the quality of and access to care for women with CVD. Additionally, the measure would expand eligibility for funding to all 50 states for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's WISEWOMAN screening program for low-income, underinsured uninsured women. Currently the program is available in only 20 states.

“Unfortunately, a majority of women and even some physicians are unfamiliar with the symptoms, diagnoses, and dangers of heart disease in women,” said Senator Stabenow. “The HEART for Women Act will help educate women and their doctors, increase access to screenings for women, and expand gender-specific analysis and research, so we are better equipped to fight this disease and save lives.”

“Cardiovascular disease, often called the “silent killer,” takes the life of one woman nearly every minute,” said Senator Murkowski. “The HEART for Women Act gives more women access to the WISEWOMAN program that provides free heart disease and stroke prevention screening to low-income, uninsured women. “Women are underrepresented in cardiovascular trials and there is a serious lapse in enforcement of rules requiring new drug applicants to submit data by sex, age group and race, said Lisa M. Tate, Chief Executive Office of WomenHeart. “As a result, female heart patients are treated with drugs, procedures and devices that have been shown to be effective in men, yet they have not been studied in a sufficient number of women. The HEART for Women Act will ensure that results of cardiovascular trials are reported by sex and that women get the best possible care for their heart health,” Tate continued. The bill was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

For more information, visit www.heartforwomen.org.

CONTACT ADDRESSES FOR GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

U.S. GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION can be obtained through Congressional Switchboard [1-866-327-8670](tel:1-866-327-8670) (this is a toll free number). You can contact your Congressman and Senator through this number without paying long distance charges.

<http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House of Representatives <http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the U.S. Senate

White House [1-202-456-1111](tel:1-202-456-1111)

STATE GOVERNMENT CONTACT INFORMATION can be obtained through

<http://www.emailyourgovernor.com/> Information available at this site allows contact with governors, members of the state legislature, state supreme court, congressional delegation and state agencies such as the Education Department, Attorney General, Motor Vehicles Department and Voter Registration.

PLEASE NOTE THAT SOME OF THIS INFORMATION MAY BE OUT OF DATE

INFORMATION ON HOW YOUR CONGRESSMAN VOTED ON KEY BILLS

<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/congress/111/bills/>

FIVE CONSTITUENT CONTACTS WILL CAUSE A LEGISLATOR TO PAY SERIOUS ATTENTION TO A GIVEN ISSUE.

Archival copies of the U.S. Forum Connection can be found at

<http://ocean.otr.usm.edu/~w305514/HomePage.htm>

Dr. Angela O. Bedenbaugh
The University of Southern Mississippi
118 College Drive #8466
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Office: [\(601\) 266-5718](tel:601-266-5718), [\(800\) 814-4673](tel:800-814-4673)
Fax: [\(601\) 266-5718](tel:601-266-5718)
Answering machine [\(601\) 266-5716](tel:601-266-5716)