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COMMON SENSE CALL FOR PREVENTION HAS BI-PARTISAN “PRO-CHOICE” AND “PRO-LIFE” SUPPORT

JEFFERSON CITY - Senator Joan Bray (D-University City) and Representative Robin Wright Jones (D-St. Louis City) today filed the 2008 Prevention First Act. The companion bills:

- Prohibit government interference in a woman's access to contraception;
- Ensure victims of sexual assault are provided information about, and access to, emergency contraception;
- Restore the highly successful, general revenue funded family planning program that served 30,000 low income women annually with well woman services;
- Require pharmacies to dispense prescriptive and over-the-counter birth control without discrimination or delay; and,
- Ensure teens receive comprehensive sex education in public schools.

“Missouri voters—by a large majority—have told us they want their elected officials to focus on promoting prevention not placing more restrictions on abortion,” Sen. Bray said. “If we, as a state, are serious about safely reducing abortions in Missouri then this legislature must focus on the core issue—unintended pregnancies. This is common sense legislation we should all be able to agree on. We encourage our ‘pro-life’ colleagues to embrace this landmark legislation.”

“Contraception is basic women's healthcare; the women of Missouri deserve to have full access to the range of options available to them, including so-called “morning after” emergency contraception,” Rep. Wright-Jones said. “And our kids deserve honest, medically accurate, comprehensive sex education so they are empowered to make responsible decisions that will keep them healthy and safe. Yet, our legislative leadership continues to promote and move bills that would only make it harder for women to access reproductive health care and do nothing to reduce unintended pregnancy. They should step up and embrace prevention!”