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In a Cowardly Move, Walker Silently Signs War on Women Bills in Secret

Madison – Governor Walker signed four anti-woman, anti-health care bills yesterday, behind closed doors and in secret. He made no public announcements, did not notify Democratic legislators, nor does it appear that members of the public were allowed to witness the signings.

Rep. Kelda Helen Roys (D-Madison) issued the following statement:

“In a cowardly act, Governor Walker signed several War on Women bills in secret yesterday. Perhaps he thought that in doing this behind closed doors, with no public notice, before a holiday weekend for many families, his actions would go unnoticed. He was wrong. We will not be silent - these issues are too important to ignore, and we are watching. Unfortunately, the GOP's War on Women is real - and we must speak out anytime politicians try to erode women's rights.

“Walker's signature to repeal the Healthy Youth Act (SB 237) will cost Wisconsin taxpayers millions - and endanger the lives and health of countless teens. In 2008, teen pregnancies cost Wisconsin taxpayers \$168 million. After the enactment of the Healthy Youth Act, teen pregnancy rates dropped to all-time low. Comprehensive sex education, as outlined in the Healthy Youth Act, is the only approach proven to reduce risky teen sexual behavior and therefore reduce teen pregnancy, abortion, and sexually transmitted infection. This bill repeals Wisconsin's 'gold standard' for education, and mandates that young people be given false, medically inaccurate information about pregnancy prevention.

“President Obama recently talked about the need to focus on economic security in the upcoming election, and I agree this must be our highest priority. Yet these War on Women bills harm our state's economic security. They do not create a single job in Wisconsin, and undermine the economic security for women and their families by limiting access to critical health care and information. These bills make Wisconsin a less free, less secure, and less healthy place for women and their families.

“I will continue to fight against policies like these, that risk our families' and nation's economic security, and take us backwards.

“Governor Walker has refused to condemn the bombing of one of Wisconsin's Planned Parenthood health care centers. His silence speaks volumes - but his signatures on these three terrible bills make clear his support for the war on women.”

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The War on Women bills secretly signed by Governor Walker yesterday:

- **Act 216 (SB 237)** – Repeals the Healthy Youth Act and removes the requirement that youth be provided with medically accurate information regarding pregnancy & STDs
- **Act 218 (SB 92)** – Bans insurance companies from covering abortions - even when a woman’s health is at risk or in cases of fetal death
- **Act 217 (SB 306)**– Adds barriers to women who seek abortion, destroys the patient-centered “informed consent” process, and criminalizes doctors who follow evidence-based best practices rather than political dictates regarding patient care
- **Act 219 (SB 92)** –Repeals the Equal Pay Act. The Equal Pay Act passed in 2009, and created a private cause of action against employers who illegally discriminate against an employee or employees. Not a single lawsuit has been filed under the Equal Pay Act since it became law in 2009; however, since it became law, the median earnings for women have risen three percent and Wisconsin has moved up from 36th place to 24th place in gender earning parity rankings.

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