



2010 Legislative Session
Weekly Update

by Jessica Lowe-Minor, BPW/FL Lobbyist

Week 3...

Week 3 was an incredibly busy week here at the Capitol! One of our bills, HB 467 by Rep. Mia Jones, was passed unanimously by the PreK-12 Policy Committee. If it becomes law, it would require that public schools incorporate information about teen dating violence into their health curriculums for 7th - 12th graders. Although it is moving in the House, its companion, SB 642 by Sen. Chris Smith, has yet to be heard.

In other news, Rep. Domino had until last Friday, March 19th at 4:30 PM to place the ERA on agenda in the Civil Justice and Courts Policy Committee. I think it would be appropriate at this point for our members to call his office and express their disappointment that he did not take that opportunity to hear an important bill for women. Domino's phone numbers: 561-625-5176/850-488-0322

Finally, there are two major cuts being discussed that BPW/FL might have an interest in.

The first would eliminate the Office of Women's Health Strategy within the Dept. of Health. This is a major change and could result in the DOH engaging in less advocacy around the issues of women's health, women's access to healthcare and gender disparities in health education and treatment. I have consulted with some other women's advocacy groups, such as the FCASV, and we'll be monitoring the situation very closely as the Session goes on.

The other proposed cut would eliminate the Office of Supplier Diversity. (See HB 5611) This office certifies Minority/Women-owned Business Enterprises (M/WBE) and performs a variety of functions with regard to the state's utilization of those businesses where possible. Currently, there is an amendment by Rep. David Rivera to preserve the Office of Supplier Diversity, and I am planning to put in a card in support of that amendment on behalf of BPW/FL.