

Georgia insight

Sue Ella Deadwyler, 4168 Rue Antoinette, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

"She hath done what she could." Mark, 14:8a

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More About S.B. 155's Mandatory HPV Shots for Sixth Graders

Georgia's one of 18 states Merck thinks are gullible enough to add still another vaccination to the ones children already have to take. Merck's new drug Gardasil is the most costly on the market at a whopping retail price of \$360 for the first three-shot course and boosters at five-year intervals. Gardasil is supposed to prevent a couple of strains of cervical cancer caused by human papillomavirus, better known as HPV, that causes about one percent of all cervical cancer cases in the U.S. HPV-related cervical cancer is easily diagnosed, responds well to treatment and does not surface until the female is almost 50 years old.

Merck's first success was in Texas where Governor Perry swallowed all Merck's hype and issued an executive order mandating Gardasil for every sixth-grade girl in Texas. Oh, yes, this is important, too. Merck contributed \$6,000 to Governor Perry's reelection campaign.

Merck's victory in Texas is being used in Georgia as an example of what needs to be done to our sixth-grade girls. **Senator Don Balfour introduced S.B. 155** February 14th. I asked him to please *not* make it mandatory, but it is. If his bill passes, the only girls that will *not* be inoculated with Gardasil are girls whose parents learn about the religious exemption and act on it. Quite frankly, I'm offended that legislators think religion is the only reason to object to filling girls with a drug that's brand new, was researched less than five years on 25,000 third-world females, only 1,184 of whom were preteens. What ever happened to common sense?

HPV is not floating through the air where everybody may be exposed. It's caught through sexual contact. So, the way to prevent HPV-related cervical cancer is to refrain from sexual contact with anyone infected with HPV and the last time I checked, sixth-grade girls aren't mature enough to engage in sex and are still under parental authority. Mandating this vaccine violates parental rights, informed consent and privacy laws.

Gardasil's safety has not been proven, especially for young girls. It's been on the market since June 2006 and at least 82 reports of serious side effects have already been filed with the FDA. Since Texas Governor Perry, obviously, ignored the facts, Texas parents are working with legislators to repeal his executive order that caused such a backlash from doctors, parents and consumer advocates that Merck's pulling back its nation-wide lobbying efforts.

But, that's not affecting us in Georgia. The author of S.B. 155 thinks Governor Perry is right and will continue pushing for sixth-grade girls in Georgia to be vaccinated with Gardasil. I dare say most parents do *not* agree with Governor Perry and object to giving their children an unproven, unnecessary, very expensive and, very possibly, harmful drug.

S.B. 155 must be killed or amended to give parents a choice. I'd think most legislators believe parents *do* have a right to choose their little girls' medication. Children, actually, *do* belong to parents. They don't belong to the state or doctors or anybody else in the village!

ACTION – Oppose. Call Health & Human Services Senators, Thomas, 404 656-6436; Unterman, 463-1368; Goggans, 463-5263; Adelman, 463-1376; Balfour, 656-0095; Butler, 656-0075; Grant, 656-0082; Hawkins, 656-6578; Henson, 656-0085; Judson Hill, 656-0150; Preston Smith, 656-0034; Tate, 463-8053; Wiles, 657-0406.

S.R. 124 Request to Congress

Urgent: Stop the Security & Prosperity Partnership with Mexico & Canada

It's being done under the guise of security and prosperity, while U.S. security is thrown to the wind. The plan is called "Security and Prosperity Partnership with Canada and Mexico," but the only countries that'll see increased prosperity are Mexico and Canada. They'll prosper at the expense of the big-hearted U.S.A., while the U.S. will be less secure than it's ever been.

The media and everyone else are, surprisingly, quiet about the emerging demands of this new plan, although it has never been presented to or authorized by Congress. That's, especially, puzzling since they're all over President Bush about everything else. But, it's hush-hush time about this blending of the U.S. with Canada and Mexico, announced by President Bush March 23, 2005 at Waco, Texas, and reaffirmed at Cancun, Mexico, March 31, 2006. If you know about it, raise your hand. I don't see those hands, but I would guess there were almost none, unless you've read that the North American Union is set to absorb us all by 2010.

Although Congress has *not* said it's okay to erase our borders between Mexico and Canada, we, finally, got the message that President Bush has no intention of stopping illegal aliens or closing our borders. In fact, he's not alone in this plan to combine the U.S. with Mexico and Canada. Twenty Working Groups in the U.S. Commerce Department are busy implementing the integration of our economy, travel, government and laws with those of Mexico and Canada. When the plan is in place, people, goods, services and money will move freely from one end of North America to the other. Mexico, Canada and the United States will lose their national identities as all three are melded into a North American Union.

This attack on U.S. sovereignty is being implemented from within our own country and must be stopped or the United States will no longer *be* the United States. Knowing that Congress has power to protect our sovereignty and stop this agreement, on January 31st **Senator Nancy Schaefer introduced S.R. 124** that was assigned to the Senate Rules Committee, where it has languished far too long. After reading the following quote, I know you'll agree it must pass.

"The gradual evolution of a...merger of the United States, Mexico, and Canada [is] a direct threat to the Constitution and national independence of the U.S. ...[and] an eventual end to national borders within North America. ...[It] has never been presented to Congress as an agreement or treaty and has had virtually no congressional oversight. ...[S]tate and local governments...would be negatively impacted by...open borders... eminent domain takings of private property along [the] planned [NAFTA] superhighways and increased law enforcement problems along those superhighways...[The Georgia Senate] urges the U.S. Congress, especially the congressional delegation from Georgia, to use all its efforts, energies, and diligence to withdraw the U.S. from any... form of North American integration or merger."

S.R. 124 remains in the "gate-keeper" Senate Rules Committee. As our legislators feverishly try to cut off perks to illegal aliens, the U.S. Commerce Department and President Bush are working to obliterate our national boundaries and destroy our sovereignty. States must act now or we'll have no country. That's a fact! Read it at SPP.gov or on White House websites.

ACTION – Support. Call Rules Committee Senators Balfour, Ch., 404 656-0095; Hamrick, V-Ch., 656-0036; Seabaugh, Sec., 656-6446; Adelman, 463-1376; Butler, 656-0075; Jack Hill, 656-5038; Hooks, 656-0065; Johnson, 656-5109; Moody, 463-8055; Pearson, 656-9221; Thomas, 656-6436; Tolleson, 656-0081; Unterman, 463-1368; Williams, 656-0089.

S.B. 78 Hospitals & Medical Facilities Must Estimate Charges

Since we've always been stuck with what could be called "the charge-of-the-day" for the tiniest bit of health care, it reminds me of something that happened in our family. At the risk of sounding like a negligent mom, I admit I didn't think it was serious when my son came in from playing football with neighborhood kids and said his finger was sore and a little swollen.

When the soreness didn't go away in a day or two, we went to the doctor. He carefully moved the finger a bit and decided it was broken. I watched as the doctor taped a tongue depressor to the finger and reassured us both that, "It'll be fine." When I asked the price of the visit, I was told the cost of the "surgery" the doctor had performed on my son's finger. But I was there all the time and it wasn't like any surgery I'd ever seen – no incision, no x-ray, no cast, no medication, nothing – only a tongue depressor taped to his finger with no return visit needed.

When I asked the doctor to explain what he meant by "surgery", he said that's what he called the tongue-depressor-taped-to-the-finger splint. He looked a little sheepish as he adjusted the charge to reflect what he had, actually, done. I don't remember the difference in the bill, but it was considerably less.

You've probably had similar experiences, but that could change if **Senator Hamrick's S.B. 78** passes. He introduced it January 30th and it's still in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. We'll need a lot of calls to get it moving and, hopefully, legislators will listen to good old grassroots Georgians instead of health care lobbyists who don't want it to pass.

S.B. 78 requires the Department of Community Health to compile and publish on the Internet drug prices for a 30-day standard-dose supply of the 50 most frequently prescribed medicines and update the information every quarter. The prices would be reported for each drug by pharmacy and by metropolitan statistical area or region.

Each licensed hospital and medical facility would be required to provide on its website a link to the patient charges and performance outcome data collected for services on various health conditions that are treated on the premises. A hard copy of the website information would be available upon request.

Hospitals and medical facilities would be required to put a notice in reception areas that such data is available and instruct patients in ways to access it on the Internet. Since the pricing information will reflect average charges to patients, costs could vary depending on the degree and severity of each illness. Also, the bill clearly states that the price of services is negotiable based on the patient's ability to pay.

In addition, medical facilities must provide, upon request, a written good faith estimate of anticipated charges before elective or non-emergency services. Medical facilities that refuse to supply the required estimates could be fined \$500 for each incident.

The target date for getting this up and running in hospitals is October 1, 2007, but comparative prices of medicines could be posted earlier. This bill would be a price-conscious health care seeker's dream. So, let's get it passed!

ACTION – Support. Call Health & Human Services Senators Thomas, 404 656-6436; Unterman, 463-1368; Goggans, 463-5263; Adelman, 463-1376; Balfour, 656-0095; Carter, 651-7738; Grant, 656-0082; Hawkins, 656-6578; Henson, 656-0085; Judson Hill, 656-0150; Orrock, 463-8054; Shafer, 656-0048; Preston Smith, 656-0034; Tate, 463-8053; Wiles, 657-0406.

H.R. 127 Opposes Instant Citizenship for Babies of Illegal Aliens

We can't get a bill passed to declare English as our official language, while foreigners boldly demand bilingual help so they don't have to learn it. It might be inconvenient to learn English, but those that can't speak it pose a huge problem for business.

Recently, a salesman was told, "You should have bilingual clerks here to help all these people that can't speak English." The salesman asked, "Which bilingual person should we hire, one that speaks English and Spanish, or English and Bosnian, Russian, Polish, Japanese, Laotian, Korean, Arabic or Vietnamese? Which do you think we need to hire?" The stunned reaction proved the person had no clue. The problem is much bigger than hiring *one* bilingual person.

To accommodate all foreigners, business would need people fluent in ten, twelve, maybe, 20 languages. Imagine the increase in the cost of doing business when there's a very simple remedy. Everyone that expects to live here should have the decency to learn to communicate in English. But, language is *not* the *only* pressing issue surrounding illegal aliens.

Pregnant women illegally cross the border into the United States for the express purpose of having babies that become instant citizens. So, mama gets to stay here, too, regardless of her illegal entry. That needs to change. It makes no sense to give citizenship to babies whose parents broke the law to get here.

With that in mind, **Representative Bobby Reese introduced H.R. 127** to stop giving citizenship to "anchor babies". In case that's a new term to you, I'll explain it this way. Just as a ship's anchor secures a spot in the water, illegal aliens enter the U.S. to produce "anchor babies" that assure them and the rest of their family a permanent place in this country.

H.R. 127 does *not* change Georgia law, but it *does* urge Congress to change citizenship laws in two ways: (a) repeal laws giving instant citizenship to babies born here if their parents are illegal aliens. And (b) award U.S. citizenship only to babies whose mothers are in this country legally. H.R. 127 explains the problems that make this resolution necessary.

The United States is facing a crisis of illegal immigration with an estimated 12 million to 30 million illegal aliens living here. It is *not* in the best interest of the United States to allow parents who are in this country illegally to have their babies become instantaneous citizens, simply, because their mothers crossed the border in time to have them born here. Since this is a federal issue the state cannot change, H.R. 127 needs to pass. It will encourage the Georgia congressional delegation to push for passage of a bill to plug this loophole in citizenship law.

H.R. 127 is in Representative Wendall Willard's Judiciary Committee. He would be quick to call a plumber if his water pipe broke at home and this problem is far more serious than that. Leaky water pipes demand emergency measures. Just so, H.R. 127 urges Congress to pass an emergency plan to eliminate the automatic citizenship incentive for illegal aliens to enter this country by hook or crook, just so they'll be here in time to produce babies that become instant citizens that "anchor" them to the U.S. Please call several of the representatives listed below.

ACTION – Support. Call House Judiciary Committee Representatives Willard, Ch., 404 656-5125; Lindsey, 656-0296; Hatfield, 656-0109; Bruce, 656-0314; Crawford, 656-0213; Fleming, 656-5024; Golick, 651-7737; Jacobs, 656-0152; Lane, 656-0109; Oliver, 656-0265; O'Neal, 656-5103; Stephenson, 656-0126; Teilhet, 656-0298; Thomas, 656-0314; Tumlin, 656-0177; (ex-officio) Wilkinson, 463-8143.

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