

“Healthy Media for Youth Act” (S. 1354)

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Although the Healthy Media Act for Youth that Girl Scouts of the USA is aggressively lobbying for in Congress has many positive elements, it also has some serious problems. The way some of the bill’s provisions are worded, it could facilitate federal funding for special interest groups that promote highly controversial issues.

The primary sponsor of this bill in the House is Rep. Tammy Baldwin, the first openly lesbian member of Congress who is a leading activist for “LGBT rights.” Among other things, Rep. Baldwin co-chairs the Congressional LGBT Equality Caucus and opposes the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which defines marriage for all federal purposes as only the union of a man and a woman. While her sexual orientation alone does not mean that any legislation she is behind should be subjected to closer scrutiny, her record of activism on homosexual issues certainly does require such scrutiny.

Below are several specific problems with this bill:

- The provisions of this bill go far beyond the objective suggested in its title. A more appropriate title would be “The Act for Youth Empowerment and Healthy Media.” This is because the bill calls for the federal government to grant \$4 million to “youth empowerment groups” without specifying what the objectives or focus of such groups to be funded should be.
- To see the potential to misspend federal tax dollars, consider that Wikipedia lists the Gay-straight Alliance, the pro-abortion World YWCA, which promotes International Planned Parenthood’s controversial “Healthy, Happy, and Hot” publication, Girls, Inc., and the International Federation of Liberal Youth as four of the top 10 youth empowerment organizations with the most articles viewed on the Internet. Many Americans and many parents of Girl Scouts would likely not agree with the objectives of a number of “youth empowerment” organizations that could be funded through this provision.
- The bill states that activities funded under “youth empowerment” may include “programs designed to teach youth how to create and use media to contribute to social change.” This goes way beyond just promoting healthy images of girls and women. It is easy to see that if some of the groups listed above that are clearly outside the mainstream in America received grants under this bill they could use federal grants for their propaganda campaigns to promote highly controversial “social change” agendas.
- One of the requirements for organizations to receive priority consideration for funding to promote healthy media is that an organization be “gender specific.” This of course makes it more likely that the Girl Scout organization would receive funding under this bill, which of course is one reason why GSUSA is behind it. While it is not uncommon for groups to promote legislation that may benefit them directly, the fact that the Girl

Scouts are increasingly involved in promoting controversial issues makes the potential funding for the Girl Scouts under this bill more concerning.

- The bill states that funds may be used to raise awareness about the damaging effects of perpetuating “gender stereotypes.” This phrase should be a red flag for anyone concerned about the indoctrination of children by groups that promote homosexuality and transgenderism as normal and acceptable lifestyles. For example, this exact language is very controversial in United Nations negotiations. This is because “homosexual rights” activists consider the depiction of men and women always as heterosexuals, or not including depictions of same-sex couples and transgenders in the media to be “negative gender stereotyping.” Given that Rep. Baldwin is the prime sponsor of this bill, it is possible that she intends this bill to fund projects that promote media images of homosexuals and transgenders under the guise of eliminating negative gender stereotypes.

Any legislation to address the legitimate issues raised by this bill should focus on dealing with those only and not try to sneak in funding for propaganda, community activism and potential indoctrination. Unless this bill is radically modified, it must be opposed.