EXHIBIT 22
DATE 3/10/11
HB 456

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Attention: Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: HB 456

As a Missoula resident, as a Planned Parenthood volunteer, and as someone who was in high school fewer than five years ago, I find HB 456 to be highly detrimental to Montana.

Certainly, sex education is a controversial topic. However, it is also a necessary one.

Studies have shown that comprehensive sex education is highly effective in preventing STDs and unplanned pregnancies, much more so than abstinence-only education – though comprehensive sex ed programs do advocate abstinence as a healthy and desirable option for teenagers.

By preventing organizations like Planned Parenthood from providing comprehensive sex education in high schools, HB 456 will create a situation in which Montana's students will be ill-prepared for a highly important aspect of their lives. While I respect that some families may wish to educate their children about sex at home, many do not feel comfortable doing so or feel ill-prepared to do so – and it is essential that the most accurate, up-to-date information be available to all.

I went to high school in Seattle, not Montana, but the information that Planned Parenthood provided in my schools' sex ed program was indispensable.

Sincerely,

Fern Slater

Please vote NO on HB 456 and allow Montana's students to have the same opportunities I had.