



## Leading the Way

*California has taken a strong position in dealing with women's health issues.*

Despite the image of the Republican Party being cold, uncaring, anti-women and children, Gov. Pete Wilson has made his commitment to women and children his administration's top priority.

From his appointment of Department of Health Services Cabinet Secretary Sandra Smoley, a former nurse, to unwavering support for innovative and thoughtful programs, a Republican administration and the governor have delivered.

In 1993, Wilson created the Office of Women's Health within the Department of Health Services to coordinate and facilitate women's health activities administration-wide. In the past, women's health issues were too often ignored.

The Wilson administration has sought to fill this void by creating programs which specifically address health needs unique to women.

Here are specifics:

### **Increasing resources for preventive health care**

- Signed the Breast Cancer Act of 1993 to increase funding for breast cancer research and treatment by more than \$20 million annually and enacted the Breast Cancer Early Detection Program to improve access to breast cancer screening and diagnostic services;

- Enacted an income tax check-off which generates funds for breast cancer research;

- The 1997-98 budget also includes \$466,000 from the California Breast Cancer Research Fund, made possible through voluntary contributions to the tax check-

off program, for grants to conduct research into the cause, detection, prevention and cure of breast cancer;

- The governor's 1997-98 budget includes \$23.6 million for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program, and a total of \$25.8 million for breast cancer activities within the Department of Health Services;

- Secured funding from the federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention to implement the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program.

### **Strengthening Prenatal Care**

- Created the Access for Infants and

Mothers (AIM) program in 1991, an innovative state insurance program for uninsured pregnant women that provides comprehensive care during pregnancy, 60 days of post-partum care and two years of comprehensive infant health care, including preventive care and immunizations.

### **Expanding Health Care Choices**

- To broaden access to health care, Wilson signed a bill to allow OB-GYN's as primary care providers, thereby allowing women to have more control over their health care without having to undergo twice the visits and pay twice the fees;

- In 1993, Wilson signed legislation which encourages all health-care service plans to provide coverage related to the diagnosis, treatment and appropriate management of osteoporosis;

- Initiated the Health Insurance Plan of California (HIPC) in 1993 to help small businesses control costs and expand access to health care without costly mandates or increased taxes. HIPC provides a statewide purchasing pool that brings small businesses together so they have the same market clout in buying health insurance and get the same rates as big business;

- In 1991, after *Rust vs. Sullivan* which upheld a "gag order" issued by the federal Department of Health and Human Services to deny federal funds to clinics that provided information about abortion, Wilson committed \$7 million in state funds to help compensate for the loss of federal funds;

- To provide even greater access to family planning services, Wilson has provided \$20.2 million in the 1996-97 budget to make contraception available to more women and men of reproductive age has have incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

As a woman, I am proud that California is a leader in women's health services, and hopeful that other states will take California's lead. ■

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## By Eileen Padberg