

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the Missouri House of Representatives

FROM: Gerard Nieters, J.D., Legislative Director
Pam Fichter, President

DATE: March 24, 2009

RE: 2009 Proposed Budget on HCS HB 10

While MRL recognizes the current difficult economy and realizes that government should always be very careful in the manner in which it spends public funds, MRL believes if the Governor can manage to find the ability to appropriate the \$1,949,512 in his budget for alternatives to abortion as was funded in years past, then certainly Missouri legislators can support the effort to save babies lives by funding alternatives to abortion at that same level. The House Budget Committee decreased funding for this life-saving program by \$184,190. Missouri Right to Life supports any amendment to restore the \$184,190 which will bring the funding for the Alternatives to Abortion program back to its 2008 level.

The Alternatives to Abortion program helps expectant mothers at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, by providing counseling and health care services to assist mothers in carrying their child to term and caring for them or to place them for adoption. The program saves innocent human lives. MRL contends that no other expenditures can have a more direct effect on helping women to choose life for their baby. According to the Department of Health this cut would result in lack of service to hundreds of women.

While we understand the difficulty in appropriating to many worthwhile programs, the Alternatives to Abortion program is the most important appropriation for the protection of innocent human lives. Surely, the House can find the funds somewhere in the budget to restore the additional \$184,190 to this vital program.