



Letters to the Editor, November 20, 2007

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Rep. John Shimkus recently wrote in this column explaining why he voted against extending the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). He protests that part of the SCHIP money is being spent on adults. In the past, states could be granted waivers which allowed the SCHIP coverage to include prenatal care for expectant mothers. Also, some states provided coverage for certain adults other than expectant mothers.

What Shimkus failed to mention is that the legislation that he voted against did, in fact, prohibit the states from obtaining waivers that provided coverage to adults other than prenatal care for expectant mothers (see HR 976 Sec. 2111.a). I suspect that the majority of the voters in Illinois and in the 19th Congressional District would agree that prenatal care is an important part of a child's health.

Shimkus also says, "The bill I voted against also removed citizenship verifications from the Medicaid and SCHIP programs, therefore allowing illegal immigrants access to taxpayer-funded health care." Actually, the bill prohibits illegal immigrants from participating in the SCHIP program. Sec. 605 of SCHIP reads as follows. "Nothing in this Act allows Federal payment for individuals who are not legal residents." (See HR 976 sec 605).

Since Shimkus seems to be parroting President Bush's reasons for vetoing this bill, one might wonder who Shimkus is actually representing. His constituents or the Bush-Cheney administration?

BOB KEEFE

Wood River

I want to publicly thank Sheriff Bob Hertz for the outstanding law enforcement of his department with regard to problems encountered at the Melville Dairy Store in Godfrey. The Melville Dairy Store was alleged to have sold alcohol to minors. The Sheriff's Office conducted an undercover sting operation to produce the evidence needed in the case.

As a result, the privilege to sell alcoholic liquor in the village of Godfrey, as granted by the liquor license to the Melville Dairy Store, was revoked. I particularly want to thank the diligent efforts of Capt. Brad Wells, Detective Josh Presson and Deputy Dustin Schneider, along with the assistance of Sgt. Michael Dixon, Sgt. Carole Doyle and Sgt. Cale Becker.

To prove a violation like this is far more difficult than many people realize. It takes the hard work and diligence of the law enforcement officials to gather the evidence necessary to sustain a conviction. Once again, I feel we are fortunate to have the services of the Madison County Sheriff's Department, lead by Sheriff Hertz, to serve the citizens of Godfrey.

I also want to thank our village attorney, Jim Schrempf, for presenting the case against Melville Dairy in an effective manner. I also want to thank Moe Juhlin, who served as acting liquor commissioner. Mr. Juhlin agreed to serve as acting liquor commissioner when it was alleged that I was personally prejudiced against the owners or operators of Melville Dairy Store due to my knowledge of the sheriff's investigation.

Sheriff Hertz has made a top priority the deterrence of drinking by minors. I agree wholeheartedly with Sheriff Hertz in his efforts and as mayor, I will deal harshly with any liquor license holder who sells liquor to minors, especially if they do so knowingly.

MICHAEL CAMPION

Mayor, Village of Godfrey

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