

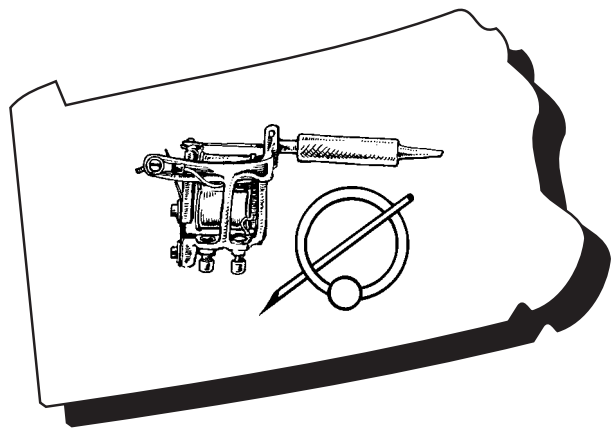
Pennsylvania Coalition of Professional Tattooists & Body Piercers Newsletter

In
Unity
There
Is
Strength!

March 1998
Volume 1, Issue 8

I N S I D E !

- House Bill 332 on the Move•
- Coalition Web Site Update•
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- Blood Transfusions & Hepatitis C•



Coalition Hotline:

412•531•5319

<http://www.pa-tattoo.com>

Editor's Notes

NEWS FLASH! Just before sending this to the printers, I received word that HB 332 had been removed from the voting calendar and forwarded to the House Appropriations Committee. Things usually get bogged down in Appropriations, which means that HB 332 should be there for awhile! This legislation is still a threat and we be foolish to take this reprieve lightly. Your letter writing campaign should now be directed to the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, wherein you should express your concerns about the bill and ask that a public hearing be held. Direct your correspondence to:

Representative John E. Barley
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Appropriations Committee, Chairman
245 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Sorry for the delay in printing, but every time I was ready to go to press, something new cropped up and I wanted to keep up-to-date with the legislative changes taking place.

The big news would have to be that a revised version of HB 332 (copies will be available at the next meeting) has been sent to the House of Representatives, passed First consideration and is now tabled to be put on the House Calendar. Rep. Krebs went crazy sending out press releases immediately following the bill's move on Wednesday, March 18, 1998. In Western PA, the major television news broadcasters ran blurbs Thursday-Sunday, while many local papers ran articles. I had at least 10 calls from studios across the state who were preparing to do interviews with local media and wanted to be armed with the latest info. (I'll have copies of all the articles I can pull together for the next meeting.)

For the most part, I think we stonewalled Krebs' attempt at garnering public support for HB 332. Most media accounts presented both sides of the story and at least contacted local studios for comments and reactions. More and more people are discovering the Coalition and getting involved.

Please understand that this is only the first step in the legislative process and HB 332 has a long way to go before it ever becomes a law! I had several people call in a panic thinking that 332 was going on the books.

On Tuesday, March 24, 1998, HB 332 was referred to the House Appropriations Committee for further investigation. This gives us extra time to push for a public hearing with the Appropriations Committee. Once you read the breakdown of the legislation, you'll understand why!

I would suggest the following: read the side-bar at right to get more information on the bill and then immediately write to the Appropriations Chairman (listed above) to voice your opinion. It's important for these politicians to know that we're concerned about our professions and this legislation! As always, call me if you need any information.

-Tim Azinger

House Bill 332 Revised

In conjunction with a major media blitz by Representative Krebs (the original sponsor of HB 332), House Bill 332 was forwarded to the House of Representatives for First Consideration on Wednesday, March 18, 1998! Several days later, the Bill passed first consideration and was tabled for the voting calendar. On Tuesday, March 24, House Bill 332 was removed from the voting calendar and forwarded to the House Appropriations Committee.

This latest version of HB 332 has been changed dramatically, adding over five pages of additional material. Aside from the sterilization and safety aspects, which we already practice, there are a number of very serious items in this legislation that make it very dangerous, possibly infringing on your civil rights!

Following is a quick synopsis of some of these items. Full copies of HB 332 will be available at the next meeting.

- 1.) The good news is that HB 332 would NOT amend the Medical Practice Act of 1985, which means tattooing and piercing would NOT be lumped in with physicians. HB 332 would direct the Department of Health to establish standards for our industry - those standards would be determined at a later time. HB 332 would also require all tattoo artists, piercing artists and corrective cosmetic artists to register with the Department of Health.
- 2.) Before receiving a license, you must pass a written examination on health, sanitization, sterilization and safety standards and your studio must pass an inspection. The fees for this licensing, testing and inspection will be determined by the Department of Health. There is no mention of who will create this examination and what it would include.

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Bill Status

Following is a list of the active House and Senate Bills that deal with tattooing and/or body piercing and their status as of Wednesday, March 25, 1998.

- HB 332 (*Forwarded to House Appropriations Committee*)
- HB 950 (*in Health and Human Services Committee*)
- HB 2034 (*Judiciary Committee*)
- SB 847 (*Appropriations Committee*)

If you need copies of these bills or if you have any questions, contact Tim at 412-531-5319.

Hepatitis C and Blood Transfusions

From The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, Friday, March 6, 1998

Intravenous drug users make up the vast majority of hepatitis C victims, but about 300,000 people may have contracted it from a blood transfusion before the first screening tests were created in 1990. It wasn't until mid-1992 that highly reliable tests to screen blood for hepatitis C were found.

WASHINGTON (AP) - Hundreds of thousands of Americans who had blood transfusions years ago will receive letters warning they may have been infected with hepatitis C, a serious liver infection that often shows no symptoms for years.

"We know that many Americans infected with hepatitis C are unaware they have the disease," newly installed Surgeon General David Satcher told a House subcommittee Thursday.

The Department of Health and Human Services is preparing a campaign to encourage people to get tested for the virus, which was not identified until 1988. It can take 20 years for symptoms to surface. There is no cure, but various treatments are in use and doctors are searching for improved therapies. About 1 million of an estimated 4 million infected Americans don't realize they have the sometimes fatal virus. Rep. Christopher Shays, a Connecticut Republican who is chairman of the House Government and Oversight's human resources subcommittee, compared the government's inertia on hepatitis C to its early reaction to AIDS. "Federal public health agencies have often pondered, but never implemented a comprehensive response to this insidious infectious agent," he said.

New research suggests hepatitis C patients are particularly vulnerable to liver failure, and the virus is the leading reason for liver transplants in the United States.

The disease is a major cause of liver cancer and cirrhosis.

It wasn't until 1992 that reliable tests to screen blood for the virus were found.

Health officials maintain the chance of contracting the virus through blood transfusions is now one in 100,000.

Satcher said the department plans to write to people who received blood before 1992 from donors who later tested positive for the virus. These blood recipients have a 40 percent to 70 percent chance of having the virus.

It may be several months before the letters are sent, though. HHS agencies must still recommend details to Secretary Donna Shalala, who will issue a regulation guiding the program.

Blood banks nationwide then must identify potential victims. They will have to check their records for any donor who tested positive for hepatitis C since 1992, then check if he or she donated blood before. If so, they will have to trace the earlier donation to the recipient.

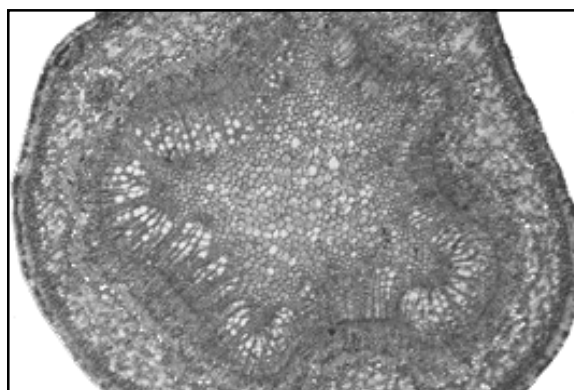
But this will not find those who received tainted blood from a donor who never donated again and it will not reveal those infected by dirty needles or sexual contact.

To reach them, Satcher said, the government plans an educational campaign for health care providers and the general public, an effort first recommended

last summer by a Public Health Service blood advisory committee. Details will be announced in about a month, Satcher said.

While the number of new infections has dropped dramatically over the last several years, 30,000 new cases appear each year, and about 10,000 people die annually.

David Zazac, spokesman for the Allegheny County Health Department, said the department does not keep track of cases of hepatitis C and cannot provide local statistics on the disease.



3.) This is a goodie - the Department of Health will determine minimum health standards for all persons working in a tattooing, body piercing of corrective cosmetic establishment. You must provide a notarized statement from a physician stating that you

were examined and that your blood has been tested for infectious diseases. [I'm checking with a lawyer, but I believe this is a blatant violation of your civil rights! Doctors and dentists aren't required to do this!]

4.) There are several clauses about municipal ordinances - their right to impose inspections, fees,

licenses, etc. This basically creates a situation whereby local authorities could possibly ban tattooing and/or piercing, or regulate you out of business!

5.) You can't refer to yourself or assume the title of "tattooist," "tattoo artists," "body piercer," etc. without being registered with the Department of Health.

6.) Facial tattoos (anything above the neck) are illegal unless you are registered as a "Corrective Cosmetic Artist," or you're a physician or surgeon.

7.) The Department of Health can deny or revoke your registration if they deem you to be a risk to the public by reason of illness, addiction to drugs or alcohol, having been convicted of a felonious act involving narcotics or controlled substances or if they deem you to be mentally incompetent.

8.) Your registration can be revoked if you maintain an association with any person violating this act, or if you aid, assist or advise any unregistered person to practice this profession.

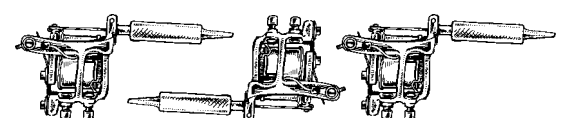
9.) First violation of the act is a misdemeanor of the third degree and carries a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than three months, or both!

10.) ADDITIONAL requirements and FEES will be designed for apprenticeship situations as well temporary licenses (for conventions).

11.) If you're a physician, surgeon or funeral director, none of this refers to you! Also, if a corrective cosmetics establishment is located in a physician's office or hospital, it is exempt from this act.

The list of negatives far outweigh the positives with this version of HB 332. With so many unreasonable items in this legislation, can it really be in the best interest of the tattoo and piercing industry?

Representative Krebs seems to have an axe to grind with our profession. For what reason, I don't have a clue, but his numerous attempts at drafting tattooing/piercing legislation and his "research" on the subject have yet to yield any reasonable or acceptable results!



Car Pool to Meetings from Western PA

For any Coalition member in the Western Pennsylvania area, we're considering renting a large van to make the trips to Carlisle for our meetings. Depending on the number of people, it would cost each person around \$15 - when you add up your cost for gas and turnpike tolls, you're bound to spend more than that (especially if you've met the State Police on the Turnpike). If you're interested, please call **Tim at 412-531-5319**, as soon as possible. The next meeting is April 26th and we should reserve the van soon. The plan is to pick a central meeting point (probably Monroeville) and have everyone leave from there early Sunday morning.

...From the *National Enquirer* **Beware! Tattoos Can Trigger Allergies**

Tattoos can make you sick! The skin art sometimes trigger painful allergic reactions, according to a top dermatologist.

"The inks can cause skin eruptions that look like eczema," warned Dr. Jerome Litt, assistant clinical professor of dermatology at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland.

"These eruptions do not respond to antibiotics and must be removed by surgery.

"They come from colored inks in the tattoos - primarily red, yellow, blue and green - which are mostly derived from metallic compounds.

"The only way to absolutely protect yourself from these skin reactions is to avoid tattoos altogether," Dr. Litt told *The ENQUIRER*.

But if you're determined to get a tattoo, despite the risks, keep this advice in mind:

- Select a tattoo artist who uses sterile equipment and has a clean, well-established business.

- Don't rely on quickie skin sensitivity testing to dye given by a tattooer - you must wait weeks to see if you react to the sensitivity testing before getting a tattoo.

- As an alternative, think about getting an all-black tattoo because it's least likely to cause allergic reaction.

- Just because you had a tattoo in a color before doesn't mean you can safely do so again, because you can potentially react to each new tattoo. There is no federal regulation of tattoo inks and formulas can vary.

-Reginald Fiz

The Coalition Web Site

<http://www.pa-tattoo.com>



The coalition website (www.pa-tattoo.com) is doing very well, as far as the number of new visitors monthly. This month, we're on target for over 3,000 unique hits. Not bad for a website that's only a few months old. To keep people coming back, and to generate new interest, there needs to be fresh material, and quite frankly, I need some contributors to submit articles for publication on the website. These can be pretty much whatever content that you want to be heard on. (Try to keep it Coalition, tattoo or piercing related).

I would like to have someone or several different someone's, maybe do a tech tip section or something along these lines, and, I'm always open to suggestions as to ways to improve the site.

I'm always available at 814-726-2860, e-mail me at tattoo@pa-tattoo.com or you can ground mail me at 122 Pennsylvania Avenue West, Warren, PA 16365.

Also to remind you, Pa-Tattoo.Com does host websites and we now have gallery pages available at very reasonable rates. (For those that don't want an entire site, just a place to show off their artwork.)

If you haven't visited the website yet, or if you haven't been there lately, check it out. It just keeps getting better and better.

Western PA Members See Transportation Notice on Page 4

COALITION

CLASSIFIEDS

Welcome to the Coalition Classifieds! Ads may be purchased under the following guidelines:
Price is \$10 for one (1) issue, \$20 for three (3) issues. Ad size is one (1) column inch which translates to five (5) lines of typeset characters. The Editor reserves the right to edit copy to conform to space constraints. All ad copy should be typed or printed and should be mailed along with payment (check or money order payable to **Pennsylvania Coalition**) to:
Pennsylvania Coalition, PO Box 502, Carnegie, PA 15106. Please indicate the number of insertions and include your phone number. Please call for pricing on larger ads.
412-531-5319

FOR SALE: One (1) Autoclave, Castle 777 Speed Clave (\$250). One (1) Branson Ultra Sonic Cleaner, Model 1210 (\$100). Call The Quillian @ 610-770-7587.

FOR SALE: One (1) Electric Ritter Dentist Chair. Contour style, black pleather upholstery. Good Condition. \$400. Call Drake @ 814-726-2860.

Artist Wanted: Stormi Steel Skin F/X, a well established, busy studio with a large customer base, is seeking a tattoo artists. Qualified individual should have at least three (3) years experience in color/black work, cover-ups and free hand. Resume, references and samples of work necessary. A full portfolio is not required, but is added plus. Our studio is located in the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area of Northeastern PA. It is the largest in the area with a fantastic reputation. The studio supports separate work stations and a complete flash room. We are a professional establishment that expects the same professionalism from any/all applicants.

If you, or someone you know, is looking for a position like this, we would like to hear from you. Please respond by mail or phone.

Keith & Jullee Chamberlain
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