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### April 29, 2011: Courageous Senator Bob Casey

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Title: Courageous Senator Bob Casey

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4/29/2011—If we want to have a healthy political life, we should have more Bob Caseys. But because we don't have a healthy political life, we won't. I was remiss in not reporting two weeks ago on Daniel Malloy's story in the Post-Gazette concerning Pennsylvania's senior Senator. During the budget fight, Casey, who is pro-life, voted against denying funds to Planned Parenthood. Here is what the story reported: "Mr. Casey is anti-abortion but favors contraception and preventative health, often couching his political stances in the language of what's practical -- will this reduce the number of abortions? He determined yes in the case of Planned Parenthood. 'One of the best ways to reduce abortion is to have family planning available, and an organization like Planned Parenthood provides a whole range of services,' he said this week." Now, maybe contraception does not actually reduce the number of abortions. There is some anecdotal evidence that the availability of contraception increases the amount of teen sex and thus increases abortions, since teens often fail to use contraception effectively. Nevertheless, this sort of vote is a judgment call. Casey is no ideologue. Naturally, pro-life ideologues, for whom a moderate like Casey is really a threat because compromise is bad for interest groups, immediately reacted to this vote: "Barely an hour had passed since Sen. Bob Casey voted against denying federal funds to Planned Parenthood on Thursday when the Family Research Council announced its intention to launch an advertising campaign against his re-election." These groups will spend more to defeat a pro-life moderate than a pro-choice radical. You see the rest of the unhealthiness of our political life by the view of pro-choice forces. They won't support Casey either: "Mr. Casey's not exactly getting counter-fire from Planned Parenthood, either, as the organization disagrees with his anti-abortion stance. Rebecca Cavanaugh, spokeswoman for Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania, said the organization isn't going to endorse him but would be happy to inform supporters of Mr. Casey's 'pro-prevention' record." In other words, moderates like Casey don't stand much of a chance. That's why I am sending a check to the reelection campaign of Bob Casey. He's going to need it.