Bill Summary: S. 438/H.R. 3526
Heart disease Education, Analysis, Research, and Treatment for Women Act (HEART for Women Act)
A bill to improve the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease and stroke in women.

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION POSITION
The American Heart Association and its American Stroke Association division strongly support the HEART for Women Act and urges Congress to pass this important legislation. This legislation would help ensure that heart disease and stroke are more widely recognized and more effectively treated in women.

SUPPORTERS
• Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.
• Society for Women’s Health Research
• WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
• American College of Cardiology
• American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
• American Osteopathic Association
• American Medical Women’s Association
• American Physical Therapy Association
• Association of Women’s Health Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
• Association of Women’s Heart Programs
• Black Women’s Health Imperative
• Business and Professional Women/USA
• Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
• General Federation of Women’s Clubs
• National Research Center for Women & Families
• And more…

WHAT THE BILL WOULD DO
The HEART for Women Act will help ensure that heart disease and stroke are more widely recognized and more effectively treated in women and take a multi-pronged approach by:

• Ensuring that gender and race-specific information about new medical treatments is available to clinicians, researchers, and the public. The legislation would require the Government Accountability Office to study whether clinical trial and drug and medical device safety and efficacy data are being reported by sex, race, and age.;

• Helping to prevent heart disease and stroke in low-income, uninsured women by authorizing the expansion of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-funded WISEWOMAN program. WISEWOMAN programs in 20 states help these women by providing preventive health services, referrals to local health care providers, as needed, and lifestyle counseling and interventions tailored to their identified health factors to promote lasting, healthy behavior modifications.; and

• Requiring the Secretary of Health and Human Services to report annually to Congress on the quality of and access to care for women with heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ENACT THIS LEGISLATION
• Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women and stroke is still the No. 3 killer of women. Heart attack, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases kill more women than the next three causes of death combined.

• Since 1979, the death rate for heart disease in men has declined steadily (by 21.5%), while the death rate for women has declined by only 9.9%, resulting in a disparity in heart disease mortality in women compared to men.

• A recent study found that the heart disease death rate for women ages 35 to 44 actually rose from 1997 to 2002, a worrisome harbinger.

• More than 90% of primary care physicians don’t know that heart disease kills more women each year than men.

• Women are more likely than men to die within a year of having an initial heart attack. Women are also less likely than men to receive certain diagnostic testing and treatments, such as angioplasties and stents, for cardiovascular diseases.