

Formula industry may have influenced ads

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Congress is scrutinizing the baby formula industry's alleged intrusion in recent U.S. government efforts to promote the benefits of breastfeeding. Lobbyists for the industry that produces nourishment for infants allegedly pressured federal health officials into changing the content of a campaign on the grounds the ads were "scaring expectant mothers into breastfeeding," The Washington Post reported Friday. In the wake of last month's testimony by Richard H. Carmona, in which the former surgeon general claimed the Bush administration repeatedly allowed political considerations to interfere with his efforts to promote public health, Rep. Henry A. Waxman's Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is taking a closer look at what motivated the decision to mute the campaign and what impact the move might have had on public health. The Post said this isn't the only instance in which attempts by the Health and Human Services Department to raise the breastfeeding rate were thwarted. In April, the department was specifically instructed by political appointees not to promote a comprehensive analysis by its own Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality of multiple studies on the health advantages of breastfeeding babies.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Formula industry may have influenced ads by UPI