



NATIONAL
ABORTION
FEDERATION

NAF Supports “Prevention First” Agenda to Expand Access to Contraception, Family Planning Services, and Medically Accurate Sex Education

Unintended pregnancy is a serious public health concern in the United States, which Congress is attempting to address with comprehensive legislation that would expand access to contraceptive services and medically accurate sexual education programs. On January 4, 2007, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid introduced the Prevention First Act (S. 21) in the Senate, and on February 5, 2007, Representative Slaughter and Representative DeGette introduced companion legislation (H.R. 819) in the House of Representatives.

Attacks continue to be made on women’s preventive health care measures, including cuts to family planning funding, inequities in insurance coverage for contraception, and restrictions on access to emergency contraception (EC) in hospitals and pharmacies. The Prevention First Act is a package of legislative initiatives designed to address these shortcomings and expand access to preventive health care services and programs that reduce unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

The Prevention First Act Would:

- Increase access to contraceptive services by authorizing a funding increase for the Title X family planning program to \$700 million.
- Require private health plans to cover FDA-approved prescription contraceptives and related medical services.
- Provide compassionate assistance for rape victims by ensuring that women who experience sexual assault receive factually accurate information and access to emergency contraception.
- Improve awareness about emergency contraception by directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to develop and disseminate information about emergency contraception to women and health care providers.
- Reduce teen pregnancy by providing funding to public and private entities to establish or expand teenage pregnancy prevention programs.
- Require states to extend coverage for family planning services and supplies to women who would be entitled to Medicaid funded prenatal, labor, delivery, and postpartum care if they become pregnant.
- Provide for comprehensive, medically accurate sex education programs that teach young people about abstinence, health, and contraceptives.

These public health initiatives would take important steps toward improving women’s access to necessary health care services. We will continue to encourage Congress to enact the Prevention First Act and strengthen its commitment to fully funded, comprehensive family planning programs, comprehensive sex education, and improve women’s access to birth control and emergency contraception.