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Contact: Bill Albert
202-478-8510

**Two Bills Aim to Improve Access to Over-the-Counter Contraception
A Statement From The National Campaign to
Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy**

(Washington, DC)—In recent weeks, two pieces of legislation have been introduced with the goal of making over-the-counter (OTC) access to contraception a reality. The first of these bills, the “Allowing Greater Access to Safe and Effective Contraception Act” (S. 1438) was introduced by Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) and Cory Gardner (R-CO). The bill encourages pharmaceutical companies to apply for OTC status for those 18 and older for their contraceptive products by offering financial incentives, and also allowing for the use of health savings accounts to pay for OTC drugs. More recently, Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) introduced the “Affordability Is Access Act” (S. 1532), which expresses a sense of the Senate that if a contraceptive pill is safe for routine daily use that the manufacturer should apply to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for OTC status. Sen. Murray’s bill also requires that if a contraceptive pill is made available OTC, insurance must cover that pill without requiring a prescription and that retailers who stock such OTC pills cannot interfere with any individual’s attempt to obtain them.

“We’re pleased to see bipartisan support for contraception in general and specifically for over-the-counter access as one more option for women who wish to plan and space their pregnancies,” said Sarah Brown, CEO of The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. “Any reasonable measure that expands contraceptive options for women is a step forward and is worth pursuing. Even so, making some contraceptives available over the counter is neither a panacea nor a substitute for insurance coverage that increases access to the full range of methods. For example, the most effective contraceptive methods, IUDs and the implant, have the greatest potential to reduce the nation’s stubbornly high rates of unplanned pregnancy but are not candidates for OTC status. And, without extending insurance coverage to OTC contraception, women may face higher out-of-pocket cost—an important issue that Sen. Murray’s bill seeks to address.”

About The National Campaign. The National Campaign is a private, nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families by preventing teen and unplanned pregnancy. Please visit www.TheNationalCampaign.org to find out more.