



The National Campaign

to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

June 20, 2016
For Immediate Release

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

(Washington, DC)—Recently, Rep. Mia Love (R-UT) introduced the Over-The-Counter Contraceptives Act of 2016 (H.R. 5138), a bill similar to that which Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) and Cory Gardner (R-NH) introduced last year. The bill encourages pharmaceutical companies to apply for Over-The-Counter (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. Last year, Rep. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) introduced the Affordability is Access Act (H.R. 3163), a bill previously introduced in the Senate by Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA). The Duckworth bill expresses a sense of the House of Representatives 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. The 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 recognition of the importance of contraception and efforts to make commonly used contraceptive methods accessible over the counter,” said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO of The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. “This is in tune with people in the United States, as 83% agree that when young women have the power to decide if and when to get pregnant, they are more likely to have healthy babies and stable families. 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, including the most effective contraceptive methods, IUDs and the implant, which are not candidates for OTC status. Without extending insurance coverage to OTC contraception, women may face higher out-of-pocket costs for a basic health care need—an important issue that Rep. Duckworth’s bill seeks to address.”

About The National Campaign. The National Campaign works to reduce both teen pregnancy and unplanned pregnancy. If we are successful in reducing unplanned pregnancy among teens and young women, child and family wellbeing will improve, there will be less poverty, and more young men and women will complete their education or achieve other life goals. For more information, visit www.TheNationalCampaign.org.