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New Report and Web Portal Highlight State Policies to Increase Information About and Access to Contraception

(Washington, DC)—In a newly released [report](#) and portal of [online resources](#), The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy highlights a variety of state policy actions focused on increasing information about and access to contraception. These state efforts, which are largely bi-partisan, include insurance coverage for an extended supply of birth control, increasing pharmacy access for contraception, Medicaid reimbursement for postpartum long-acting reversible contraception (LARC), and expanding information about preventing unplanned pregnancy for college students, among other initiatives.

“State policymakers—Republicans and Democrats alike—are leading important efforts to ensure that all young people have access to the information and services necessary to decide if and when to get pregnant. This is consistent with Americans’ strong [bi-partisan support for contraception](#), and for its contribution to widely-shared goals such as reducing unplanned pregnancy and abortion, saving tax dollars, and strengthening families.” said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO, The National Campaign. “We are excited to recognize the innovative and important policies that states are enacting to address all the barriers women face when attempting to learn about and access birth control. Taken together they help move us in a direction where all women are able to choose the best contraceptive method for themselves, and have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant.”

The ability to plan, space, and prevent pregnancies is linked to a wide array of benefit for women, men, children, and society—including more educational and economic opportunities for young women and men, improved maternal and infant health, greater family wellbeing, as well as reduced public spending and fewer abortions. Recognizing this, many states are taking action. Some of the efforts highlighted in the new [report](#) are:

- Laws in California, Oregon, and Tennessee allowing pharmacists to prescribe and dispense some hormonal methods of birth control. These measures are particularly useful to women without ready access to a doctor.
- Guidance issued in 26 states and the District of Columbia making it possible for Medicaid to reimburse providers for LARC devices in the hospital immediately after a woman has given birth.
- Legislation in Maryland, Illinois, and Vermont that builds on contraceptive coverage gains achieved under the Affordable Care Act. For example, in 2018 Maryland will require most private insurers to cover all FDA-approved prescription contraceptives (as well as vasectomies), without out-of-pocket costs.
- Delaware’s Contraceptive Access Now initiative—a public-private partnership which so far has trained more than 1,000 clinicians and support staff at 81 sites across the state.

- Legislation in Mississippi and Arkansas directing state higher education entities to work with community colleges and public universities to develop action plans to address unplanned pregnancy.

“As a national organization committed to identifying and promoting the best ideas to increase knowledge and access to contraception, we are proud to aggregate and share information about positive efforts going on in states across the country. It is important for states to learn from one another on these matters,” Ehrlich said.

The report also underscores that even though [birth control is not controversial](#)—81% of the public, including 70% of Republicans and 90% of Democrats, agree that contraception is a basic part of women’s health care—it is not always affordable or accessible. The fact remains that as many as 20 million women in need of publicly funded contraception [live in places where access is severely limited or non-existent](#).

“Contraceptive deserts and disparities still exist, despite progress in reducing unplanned pregnancy in recent years,” Ehrlich stated. “This makes state-level action to improve access to contraception even more important.”

Please see the [state policy portal](#) at TheNationalCampaign.org for links to state-specific information about laws, public funding, federal grants, and more. Data for each state—including information about teen and unplanned pregnancy, public costs associated with teen childbearing and unplanned pregnancy, racial/ethnic breakdowns, and more can be found at the [state data landing page](#). Once there, click on any state for easily readable and printable state-specific details.

About The National Campaign: The National Campaign is a private, non-partisan, non-profit 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 or follow along on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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