

## Federal Policy Action Center

This page focuses on federal policy. Please visit our [state policy portal](#) for state resources.

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### **Advocacy vs. Educating Policymakers**

Remember, grantees can advocate (activities such as asking members to take action on legislation, support a particular program funding level, or vote in a specific way) for federal funding, they just cannot use their federal funds to do so. But, be sure you're familiar with the rules of your organization; some prohibit advocacy.

If you aren't able to advocate, that doesn't mean there is nothing for you to do. You can still do your part to protect the federal programs that are making a difference in your community, by educating members of Congress about the work these programs are doing. Simply sharing information about the great work that the Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program or the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) is supporting in your community is education, not advocacy. For examples of the difference between advocating and educating, see our [sample advocacy letter](#) and [sample education letter](#).

If you are advocating, you will have a policy-related "ask," such as **"please maintain funding for the evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program and the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 and beyond."**

To look up your Representative, [click here](#) and enter your zip code in the box on the top right. To find your Senators, [click here](#).

### **Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Education**

The Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program and the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) are complementary federal funding streams for teen pregnancy prevention education. They are high quality examples of tiered, evidence-based grant making that use evidence to inform awards as well as continuous improvement.

### **Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program**

**Current Status for FY 2017:** At the beginning of May, the President signed an omnibus appropriations bill to fund the government through the end of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, which ends September 30,

2017. It maintains level funding of \$101 million for the TPP Program. Please see The National Campaign's [statement](#) and page 987 of the [bill](#) for more information.

### **What's Happened So Far for FY 2018 Appropriations:**

- The TPP Program needs to be funded annually.
- On May 23<sup>rd</sup> the President released his FY 2018 budget, which proposes to eliminate the TPP Program (see [page 91](#)). While the President's budget is a proposal and does not become law, it does signal to Congress the President's priorities and what he is willing to eliminate. Please see The National Campaign's [statement](#) on the President's budget proposal.
- Congress ultimately controls the purse strings, and the appropriations process for FY 2018 (October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018) just began in July.
- On July 20<sup>th</sup> the House Appropriations Committee voted to pass the [LHHS bill](#) out of committee, along party lines. The bill eliminates funding for the TPP Program. Representative Lee proposed an amendment to restore the TPP Program, but it failed. See the National Campaign's [statement](#) on the bill.

### **What Happens Next:**

- The Senate will take up their version of the bill, but they are not expected to do so before the August recess. In the meantime, we need your help to protect this funding. August recess is a great opportunity to meet with your Senators when they will be home in the district. Now is the time to start trying to schedule those meetings.
- If you can advocate, ask your Senators: "Please protect the current funding level and structure of the evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program administered by the HHS Office of Adolescent Health."
- For more ways to take action, even if you can only educate, [click here](#).

### **Another threat to the TPP Program**

Separate from the appropriations process, the TPP Program faces another challenge. In early July, TPP Program grantees were notified by OAH that their five-year projects will end after year three (July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018). Year three funding comes from FY 2017 funding, which has already been appropriated. These notices of shortened project periods are *highly* unusual. If your organization received such a notice, you may want to inform your members of Congress, especially those who you have previously shared information with about the important work you are doing through your grant. Our understanding is that some other HHS grants have also been shortened.

### **Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP)**

**Current Status:** PREP is a mandatory program that is authorized outside of the annual appropriations process. In 2015, PREP funding was extended through the end of FY 2017 (September 30, 2017). Please see The National Campaign's [statement](#) for more information.

### **What's Next:**

- PREP needs to be extended past FY 2017.

- The President’s FY 2018 budget proposed a two-year extension of PREP (through FY 2019) at its current annual funding level of \$75 million (see PDF [page 325](#)). Please see The National Campaign’s [statement](#) on the President’s budget proposal.
- Again, it is up to Congress to act, and continued funding for PREP will likely be part of broader “health extenders” legislation that would address several programs set to expire at the end of FY 2017. The Senate Finance Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Committee are responsible for shaping this legislation. However, it cannot be assumed that PREP will be included, so we must work hard to advocate and educate members about the importance of the program.

### **What Can You Do to Protect the TPP Program and PREP? (Hint: Everyone Can Do Something)**

Whether you can advocate or only educate, it is critical that you reach out to your members of Congress, especially if there is a [current TPP Program or PREP grant benefitting your community](#). If you’re not sure of the difference, please see [Advocacy vs. Educating Policymakers](#).

**If you have two minutes and can advocate:** Please consider having your [organization sign on](#) to this [letter](#) from more than 200 national, state, and local groups asking Congressional Leadership to support maintaining investments in the TPP Program and PREP.

**If you have two minutes and can educate:** Spread the word to other organizations about the sign-on letter using the following copy: “I’m sharing a sign-on [letter](#) coordinated by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy asking Congress to maintain investments in the evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program and the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP). These programs are serving youth and communities with the greatest need. The National Campaign will continue adding organizations to strengthen the chorus of voices. We hope you will consider adding your organization. **To add your organization’s name to the letter click [here](#).**”

If you have more time, there are a number of ideas below that you can use whether advocating for these programs or educating policymakers.

#### **If you have 20 minutes or more**

- If you have board members or other friends who have good relationships with your Congressional delegation, encourage them to weigh in—a quick phone call or email from someone who is well connected goes a long way.
- Ask the young people you work with to lend their voice—Consider working with your young people to draft letters to the editor, send emails to elected officials, and/or use social media to encourage their friends to contact their elected officials. If you’re not already, please like follow [The National Campaign](#) on Facebook and follow [@TheNC](#) on Twitter—we post a lot of helpful info about these programs that you can retweet or use to draft your own content.
- Collect short stories or quotes from the youth you serve, and parents/guardians when possible, to showcase the impact of your work in the community and to put a personal face on the work you

do. Use these narratives to enhance communications about the importance of your work and continued funding. Consider including these quotes in a newsletter, and then forward them to members of Congress to educate them on the great work happening in their state/district.

- Send an alert to others in your network asking them to contact elected officials to let them know about the value of your program.

### **If you have an hour or more**

- Develop a statement or news release to make sure local press know about the grants serving your area, and how they benefit your community.
- Create documents to use in your outreach efforts that demonstrate the scope of your project, how much funding is going into the state or district, and how many people are being served with the funds. See grantee [Success Stories](#) created by the Office of Adolescent Health for examples, and a [great one-pager](#) from TPP Program grantee, Mission West Virginia.
- Take advantage of recess in the [House](#) and [Senate](#) when members of Congress will be in their home districts and try to set up meetings and site visits with them.

### **Key Messages to Use in Your Outreach**

- Since the TPP Program and PREP began in 2010, the teen birth rate has [declined by 41%](#), more than double the decline in any preceding six-year period.
- Investing in evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs saves taxpayer dollars. Teen pregnancy costs taxpayers at least \$9.4 billion annually, and the estimated savings in 2010 alone due to the 61% decline in the teen birth rate between 1991 and 2010 was \$12 billion.
- 85% of adults (including 75% of Republicans and 89% of Democrats) favor maintaining federal funding for the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program and the Personal Responsibility Education Program.
- *If you can advocate on TPP Program, the key message is: Please protect the current funding level and structure of the evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program administered by the HHS Office of Adolescent Health.*

### **Additional Resources**

- Use our [sample advocacy letter](#) or [sample education letter](#) to reach out to your members of Congress or to invite them to a site visit.
- Learn more [state-specific information](#) about teen and unplanned pregnancy, including federal grants going to the state.
- Visit our [state data portal](#).
- Review our [polling data](#) that demonstrates widespread support for the evidence-based TPP Program and PREP. More [detailed polling data](#) demonstrates support across political, regional, racial/ethnic, and regional groups.
- Read The National Campaign's [FY 2018 Appropriations Request Letter, which](#) contains more key points about why to continue funding for the TPP Program.
- Review the latest from the Media and Press:

- [Reveal, “Trump administration suddenly pulls the plug on teen pregnancy programs.”](#) This article highlights recent action by the administration to shorten five-year TPP Program grants to three years. [See more articles](#) like this from other media outlets.
- [Montana Standard, “Teen pregnancy prevention puts youth in control of their futures”](#). This article highlights the great work being funded in Montana through PREP.
- [The Hill, "Pitting abstinence vs. contraception won't help avoid teen pregnancies"](#). This op-ed by The National Campaign's CEO Ginny Ehrlich, in response to arguments put forth by advocates of abstinence-only programs. She explains what makes the TPP Program unique and its strength—a focus on evidence.
- Social Innovation Resource Center, [“Trump Budget Uses Evidence to Justify Budget Cuts”](#). This article highlights elimination of TPP Program, a signature evidence-based program.
- People For The American Way [Blog post, "Keep the War on Science Away from Proven Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs"](#). This blog post highlights [this letter](#) from more than 200 groups that have called on Congress to support evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention.
- Pregnant Pause [Blog post, “Nearly 200 Groups Call on Congress to Support Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention”](#). This post, by The National Campaign's Tara Mancini, discusses the strong show of support from a diverse array of organizations calling on Congress to continue funding for TPP Program and PREP.

## Contraception

Birth control is directly linked to a wide array of benefits to women, men, children, and society, including fewer unplanned pregnancies. It is also the case that nearly half (45%) of all pregnancies in the U.S. are reported *by women themselves* as unplanned. The good news is unplanned pregnancy is declining for the first time in decades, however great disparities remain—women of color, low income women, and women with less education all have higher rates of unplanned pregnancy.

The Title X Family Planning Program (Title X) and Medicaid are important programs that support low-income women's access to birth control. In addition, the Affordable Care Act strengthened affordable access to contraception by expanding the number of Americans with public or private health insurance and eliminating cost-sharing for contraception.

The key messages and resources directly below apply to Title X, Medicaid, and no co-pay birth control. Jump to [Title X](#), [Medicaid](#), and [no co-pay birth control](#) for the current status, and what you can do to protect each one.

### Key Messages on Birth Control

- 81% of adults (including 70% of Republicans and 90% of Democrats) agree that birth control is a basic part of women's health care ([The National Campaign, 2016](#)).
- 91% of Americans find birth control morally acceptable ([Gallup, 2017](#)). In fact, more than 90% of all Americans (across political parties, race, and ethnicity) agree that for those trying not to get pregnant, using birth control is taking personal responsibility ([The National Campaign, 2016](#)).

- Ensuring women have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to become pregnant improves educational attainment and family wellbeing, saves taxpayer dollars, and reduces abortion.

### **Birth Control Resources**

- [Questions for Policymakers about Birth Control Coverage and Access](#). We encourage anyone in a setting where there is an opportunity to interact with legislators to ask these key questions.
- [Birth control access maps](#). Nearly 20 million women in need of public funding for contraception live in contraceptive deserts meaning they lack “reasonable access” to a public clinic with the full range of methods. See how your state compares.
- Polling on the popularity of birth control
  - o [Everyone Loves Birth Control](#)
  - o [Survey Says: Thanks, Birth Control](#)
- [Birth control stories](#). Feel free to use stories we’ve collected about how birth control access has helped women around the country.

### **Title X Family Planning Program**

**Current Status (FY 2017):** At the beginning of May, the President signed an omnibus appropriations bill to fund the government through the end of the FY 2017, which ends September 30, 2017. It maintains level funding of \$286.5 million for the Title X program. Please see The National Campaign’s [statement](#) and page 952 of the [bill](#) for more information.

### **What Happened So Far for FY 2018 Appropriations:**

- Title X needs to be funded annually.
- On May 23, President Trump released his FY 2018 budget request, which includes level funding at \$286.5 million for the Title X program (see [PDF page 289](#)). However, it also proposes to prohibit any funding in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (LHHS) appropriations bill (which funds Title X), “for certain entities that provide abortion, including Planned Parenthood”. Please see The National Campaign’s [statement](#) on the President’s budget proposal.
- As a reminder, the President’s budget does not become law. Congress controls the purse strings, and they just began the appropriations process for FY 2018 (October 1, 2017 –September 30, 2018) in July.
- On July 20<sup>th</sup> the full House Appropriations Committee voted to pass the [LHHS bill](#) out of committee, along party lines. The bill eliminates funding for Title X. Ranking Member Lowey proposed an amendment to restore Title X funding, but it failed. See the National Campaign’s [statement](#) on the bill.

### **What Happens Next:**

- The Senate will take up their version of the bill, but our understanding is that they will not do so before the August recess. In the meantime, we need your help to protect the program.

## What Can You Do to Protect Title X?

- Whether you can advocate or only educate, it is critical that you reach out to your members of Congress to let them know the importance of Title X to your community. If you're not sure of the difference, please see [Advocacy vs. Educating Policymakers](#).
- August recess is a great opportunity to meet with your Senators when they will be home in the district. Now is the time to start trying to schedule those meetings.
- If you can advocate, the ask is: *"Oppose all cuts to Title X."*

## Title X Specific Resources

- [Key points on Title X](#)
- [Summary polling data](#) that demonstrates widespread support for Title X and [detailed polling data](#) that demonstrates widespread support across political, regional, and racial/ethnic groups.
- The National Campaign's [FY 2018 Appropriations Request Letter](#) contains more key points about why to continue funding for the Title X Program.
- Data
  - o The National Campaign's [state profiles](#) with key info on Title X.
  - o NFPRHA's [state profiles](#) with other data on Title X.

## Medicaid

The Medicaid program is a partnership between states and the federal government, with several different pathways to eligibility. States have been required to cover family planning services for reproductive age beneficiaries since 1972. States also have the option to provide a more limited set of benefits, such as family planning services, to those with income above the traditional Medicaid eligibility levels. Twenty-six states [have Medicaid Family Planning expansions](#). In addition, 32 states (including Washington, D.C.) have [expanded full Medicaid eligibility](#) to low-income, non-disabled adults (a group that was not eligible under traditional Medicaid), as the Affordable Care Act allows. Medicaid plays a vital role in offering contraception to low-income individuals, accounting for 75% of public spending on family planning.

## Current Status:

- At the beginning of May, the House passed the American Health Care Act (AHCA), which would threaten health insurance and contraceptive coverage for millions of women, in addition to blocking Medicaid reimbursements from going to Planned Parenthood, a key provider of birth control for low-income women.
- In late June, the Senate released a draft bill, similar to the AHCA, called the Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA).
  - o Similar to the House-passed bill, the BCRA would result in millions losing their health insurance—both Medicaid and insurance plans purchased on the exchanges—and with it their coverage of birth control.
  - o The Congressional Budget Office estimates the BCRA would result in 22 million people losing their health insurance.

- It would also block Medicaid reimbursement from going to Planned Parenthood, a key provider of birth control for low-income women, as the House bill did. Read The National Campaign's statement on the bill [here](#).
- An updated version of the BCRA , released on July 13<sup>th</sup>,also includes an amendment that would allow health plans to opt out of key coverage requirements including the requirement to cover the full range of birth control methods without co-pays or deductibles.

### **What Happens Next:**

- The ball remains in the Senate's court, where Senators are working on various proposals to see what might get enough support to pass the Senate. The Senate is holding off on a vote on the BCRA until the week of July 23<sup>rd</sup> or possibly later. In the meantime, it remains vital for you to weigh in with your Senators and urge them to vote against the BCRA.
- Meanwhile, on July 13<sup>th</sup> the LHHS Subcommittee passed their version of the FY 2018 LHHS spending bill, along party lines, which eliminates Title X and prohibits any funding in the bill from going to Planned Parenthood. For more details, please see The National Campaign's [statement](#) on the LHHS Subcommittee bill.

### **What Can You Do to Protect Access to Contraception through Medicaid?**

#### **If you have two minutes:**

Tell us your [birth control access story](#). Whether you are one of the millions of women who gained access to affordable contraceptive services through Medicaid or other provisions of the Affordable Care Act, [we want to know your story](#).

#### **If you have more time:**

- Call your [Senator](#) and ask them to vote against the BCRA. Send an alert to others in your network asking them to do the same. For more on how to call your Senators including a video and sample script, check out [this article](#).
- Write a letter to the editor or an op-ed about one of the following:
  - The effect the BCRA's repeal of Medicaid expansion, increase in cost of private plans and option for plans not to cover birth control at no co-pay will have for women in your District/state.
  - The difference Title X/ Medicaid/ no co-pay birth control has made in your life.
- When Congress next goes out on recess (currently expected to be in mid-August) take advantage the opportunity when members of the [House](#) and [Senate](#) will be in their home districts and try to set up meetings with them or attend their [town hall meetings](#). Prepare for your meeting with our [Town Halls and Phone Calls: Join the Fight to Protect Birth Control Access](#).

### **No Co-Pay Birth Control**

Thanks to the Women's Preventive Services provision of the Affordable Care Act, women covered by Medicaid expansion, marketplace, and employer-based plans are not required to pay extra out-of-pocket

costs for women's preventive services, which includes birth control. An estimated 55 million women benefit from the Women's Preventive Services provision. Women have saved at least \$1.4 billion in out-of-pocket costs for birth control pills alone since the benefit went into effect, and there is evidence that the provision is increasing the ability of women to obtain more effective birth control methods for those who want them.

**Current Status:** While the American Health Care Act (AHCA) referenced above would result in millions losing health coverage, it did not specifically alter or remove the Women's Preventive Services provision. However, a new version of the BCRA includes a provision that would allow insurance companies to offer plans that do not meet all the requirements of the Affordable Care Act. Among the many coverage protections that plans could waive is the requirement to cover all methods of birth control without co-pays or deductibles. This is in addition to the estimates that millions of women of reproductive age would lose their health coverage altogether, and therefore wouldn't have birth control coverage.

Additionally, the Administration may make changes to the regulations that govern how the contraceptive coverage provision is implemented. A draft rule that was leaked earlier this year but has yet to be released would result in potentially hundreds of thousands of women losing their coverage of no co-pay birth control. Read The National Campaign's statement on the leaked draft rule [here](#). A rule is still expected to be forthcoming from the administration, but we do not know when or exactly what changes it may make.

**What Happens Next:** If the leaked draft of the rule referenced above were to go into effect in its current form—it could eliminate no co-pay coverage of some or all methods of birth control for hundreds of thousands of women. We do not know for sure what changes the Administration may propose to the Women's Preventive Services provision, nor the exact text of the final Senate BCRA, but these remain serious threats to the current status of no co-pay birth control.

### **What Can You Do to Protect Access to No Copay Birth Control?**

#### **If you have two minutes:**

Tell us your [birth control access story](#). Whether you are one of the millions of women who gained access to affordable contraceptive services through the Affordable Care Act, or one of many that still lack access to the full range of methods, [we want to know your story](#).

#### **If you have more time:**

- Call your [Senator](#) and tell them to oppose the BCRA and protect no co-pay birth control and support the [Save Women's Preventive Care Act](#). Send an alert to others in your network asking them to do the same.
- Write a letter to the editor or an op-ed about one of the following:
  - o The effect that rolling back no co-pay birth control will have on you and/or other women in your District/state.

- The difference no co-pay birth control has made for you or other women you know.
- Take advantage of the August recess in the [House](#) and [Senate](#) when members of Congress will be in their home districts and try to set up meetings with them or attend their [town hall meetings](#). Prepare for your meeting with our [Access or Town Halls and Phone Calls: Join the Fight to Protect Birth Control Access](#).