

Co-Sponsor the Prevention Through Affordable Access Act (H.R. 4054)

November 15, 2007



Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 100,000 bipartisan members of the American Association of University Women, I urge you to **cosponsor the Prevention Through Affordable Access Act (H.R. 4054)**. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 inadvertently excluded over 400 clinics from programs run by drug manufacturers providing nominally priced birth control. This means that many women, especially college students, are excluded from receiving low cost birth control from their local safety-net healthcare provider or university health clinic. Congress must act to restore access to these women.

Prevention is the cornerstone of family planning and reproductive health. Low-income women and college students rely on safety-net healthcare providers and university health clinics to provide comprehensive reproductive health services at affordable prices. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 made providing affordable birth control impossible for many of these clinics.

AAUW supports the right of every woman to safe, accessible, affordable, and comprehensive family planning and reproductive health services. Since the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 went into effect in January 2007, over 3 million undergraduate students have seen their birth control costs rise.¹ For women younger than 30, the pill is the leading method of birth control.² In some instances, monthly birth control pill pack prices skyrocketed from \$10 up to \$40 or \$50 in university health clinics.³ These increasing costs are forcing women to decide between basic needs and basic reproductive health. Increasing access to contraception empowers women to make informed decisions concerning their reproductive health.

This barrier to access is the result of a bureaucratic mistake. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 contains provisions that were intended to clarify which organizations are eligible for nominally priced drugs, and how these prices should be considered in Medicaid prescription drug pricing, but not to eliminate important safety-net health care providers from accessing this important resource. The Prevention Through Affordable Access Act will simply correct this unintended consequence by clarifying that university health clinics whose main purpose is to serve students do in fact qualify, as do safety-net health care clinics that are clear public health providers.

AAUW supports this pro-prevention, pro-women's health legislation, along with over 120 cosponsors -- Democrats and Republicans alike. Restore affordable birth control access to college students and low-income women. I urge you to **cosponsor the The Prevention Through Affordable Access Act (H.R. 4054)**. To become a cosponsor contact Eli Kogan (202/225-3965 or Eli.Kogan@mail.house.gov) in Rep. Joseph Crowley's office. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/785-7720, or Tracy Sherman, government relations manager, at 202/785-7730.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Maatz
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

¹ American College Health Association. American College Health Association - National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA) Web Summary. http://www.acha-ncha.org/data_highlights.html. Accessed Nov 14, 2007.

² Alan Guttmacher Institute "Contraceptive Use, Fact Sheet." http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_contr_use.html#10. Accessed Nov. 14, 2007.

³ Planned Parenthood Foundation of America. "College Students and Low-Income Women Need Your Help." <http://www.plannedparenthood.org/news-articles-press/politics-policy-issues/birth-control-access-prevention/college-students-and-low-income-women-need-your-help.htm>. Accessed Nov. 14, 2007