

March 8, 2021

Rep. Kelly Morrison
507 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155



Dear Representative Morrison,

As the leadership of the Minnesota Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), we strongly support the Protect Access to Contraception (PAC) Act, HF520. We are delighted to support this state-based affirmation of the rights of women to freely access contraception and thus choose if and when to get pregnant.

Most services in HF520 are currently covered by Minnesota Health Plans, but recent Federal rulings have limited the coverage through the Affordable Care Act. This bill clarifies, on the state level, that these services must be covered. This bill includes coverage for all FDA approved contraceptive devices and drugs, in addition to the consultation, exam and procedures related to contraception.

Access to contraception supports healthy women and healthy babies. Women who space pregnancies have improved health status, increased work force engagement, and economic self-sufficiency. Infants born as a result of unintended pregnancies are at greater risk of preterm birth, low birth weight, and poor mental and physical functioning in early childhood. There are other non-contraceptive benefits and uses of hormonal birth control include treatment for endometriosis, polycystic ovary syndrome decreased menstrual pain and bleeding and reduced gynecologic cancers. Contraception does not cause miscarriage, abortion or infertility. Access to the full range of FDA-approved contraception with no cost-sharing or other restrictions, is crucial to women's health.

Access to contraception is a nearly universal need. 99% of women who are sexually active have used some form of contraception and 87.5% report use of a highly effective reversible method. Access to contraception makes economic sense. Unintended pregnancies in 2008 resulted in \$12.5 billion government expenditures - at a cost to taxpayers, while stifling academic, business and economic achievements for women.

Optimizing access to consistent, effective and affordable contraception to prevent unintended pregnancy is the most effective way of reducing abortions. Publicly funded family planning in 2014 prevented the US rate of unintended pregnancy, unplanned birth and abortion from being 68% higher.

All women, regardless of her insurer, employer, or income, deserve access to contraception to make their own family planning and medical decisions in conjunction with their doctor. It should be easy, affordable, and free from political interference. HF520 will guarantee that for the women of Minnesota.

Respectfully submitted,

Siri Fiebiger MD, MPH
Legislative Chair, MN ACOG