

July 2009

Preventing Unintended Pregnancies, Reducing the Need for Abortion and Supporting Parents Act: A Section by Section Summary

The “Preventing Unintended Pregnancies, Reducing the Need for Abortion and Supporting Parents Act” offers common ground policy solutions on abortion that reduce the need for abortion by addressing its root causes. It has two policy tracks: preventing unintended pregnancies and supporting pregnant women and new families, including adoption.

Prevention

The bill first aims to prevent unintended pregnancies through:

- **Grants for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Comprehensive Education:** Grants for pregnancy prevention education will be given to programs that encourage teens to delay sexual activity, provide information about contraception, including the risks and benefits of contraceptives as a means to prevent pregnancy and STDs, educate teens on the responsibilities that come with parenthood, encourage family communication, and teach youth how to develop healthy relationships and make responsible decisions. Programs must be evidence-based and provide age-appropriate, factually and medically accurate, complete and scientifically-based information. Grant recipients must be able to match 25% of the federal funds.
- **Support for After-School Programs:** This section would reauthorize appropriations to various after-school programs, including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the Carol M. White Physical Education programs, Federal TRIO programs, and GEARUP.
- **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Incentive Grants:** For fiscal year 2010, any state which submits a plan to decrease teen pregnancy that involves parents or other caretakers, includes both young men and young women, and pays special attention to communities or populations experiencing higher teen pregnancy rates, may receive a grant. For each of the fiscal years 2011-2014, grants will be available only to “high-achieving states” who achieve above the national performance in reducing teen pregnancy rates and also submit a plan to decrease teen pregnancy, involve parents or other caretakers, focus on young men as well as young women, and pay special attention to communities or populations experiencing higher teen pregnancy rates. No matching funds are required to receive these grants. The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will also establish a new national goal for teen pregnancy prevention and periodically update Congress on the related progress.
- **Grants to Encourage Creative Approaches to Teen Pregnancy Prevention:** This grant program is designed to support creative approaches to reduce teen pregnancy. Grant recipients must provide a 25% match to the federal funds. They

are also required to submit to HHS reports of their success, and the Secretary of HHS, in turn, must submit a report on the success of the grant programs to Congress.

- **A National Initiative to Enlist Parents in Preventing Teen Pregnancy:** Competitive grants will be available to establish a national initiative to support parents of teens. The initiative will work to equip parents with information and resources to promote and strengthen communication with their children about sex, values, and healthy relationships; to develop and implement print, broadcast, internet and other new media campaigns to promote positive information and messages for parents about how they can help address teen pregnancy; and to provide challenge grants to states to promote parent education and involvement.
- **Grants to Prevent Unplanned Pregnancy Among Community College Students:** Community colleges will be eligible for demonstration grants to develop and implement innovative approaches to prevent unplanned pregnancy and promote healthy relationships among community college students. Grant recipients must participate in a project evaluation and submit all data requested by the Secretary of HHS.
- **Restoration of Medicaid Entitlement to Coverage of Family Planning Services:** The Deficit Reduction Act, now passed into law, puts countless low-income women's access to family planning at risk through the creation of "benchmark" plans. Benchmark plans allow states to avoid federal requirements for required services in the Medicaid program, one of which is family planning. This provision would ensure that low-income women on Medicaid will continue to have access to contraception by restoring family planning to the status of mandatory for benchmark plans under the Medicaid program.
- **Expanded Coverage of Family Planning under Medicaid for Low-Income Women:** Federal law requires state Medicaid programs to cover pregnancy-related care for women with an income up to 133% of the federal poverty line, and gives states the flexibility to set the income ceiling even higher. Over 40 states currently cover pregnancy-related services for women with incomes above the required level. This provision would amend the Medicaid statute to ensure that states extend coverage for family planning services and supplies to women who would be entitled to Medicaid funded prenatal, labor, delivery and postpartum care.
- **Increased Support for the Nation's Title X Family Planning Program:** This section would authorize increased funding for Title X of the Public Health Service Act, the only federal program dedicated solely to providing contraceptive and related reproductive health care services to low-income women. Notably, the Title X statute prohibits the use of any program funds to pay for abortions.
- **Contraception Information for New Moms:** The bill authorizes new grants which would require providing accurate and complete information about contraception at home visits to low-income families.

Support

The second half of the bill is designed to provide support to women preparing for childbirth and new parents through:

- **Expanded Medicaid and CHIP Coverage for Mothers and Children:** This section provides states the option to expand postpartum care - from 60 days to one year - for pregnant women whose labor and delivery are covered by Medicaid and CHIP, increases the CHIP definition of a low-income child from 200% to 250% of federal poverty guidelines, and provides an outreach program to encourage those eligible for services to enroll.
- **Coverage of Maternity Care:** This section would close the gap in coverage of pregnant women who have individual coverage with private insurers and both remove pregnancy as a pre-existing condition, and require coverage of maternity care. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, which provides that pregnancy cannot be considered a pre-existing condition, applies only to group health plans—not to individual coverage.
- **Improved Access to Prenatal Ultrasounds:** This section makes grants for the purchase of ultrasound equipment available to community health centers.
- **A Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Program for Women:** This section creates a new violence screening and treatment program for women. This section also supports grants to states to carry out a public awareness campaign regarding domestic violence against women.
- **Increased Support for Pregnant and Parenting Students:** This section provides grants to educational institutions to provide support services to assist both pregnant students who have decided to carry their pregnancies to term and parenting students in continuing their studies and graduating. It also increases support for the Child Care Access Means Parents In School (CAMPIS) program.
- **Grants for a National Information Campaign on Adoption:** This section provides grants to establish national information campaigns to educate the public about adoption, including foster care adoption. Grantees must be research-based and have experience in the field of adoption and foster care, comprehensive knowledge and data about adoption and foster care, and a demonstrated ability to work with and provide assistance to a broad range of individuals and entities. The campaigns will promote accurate and positive information and messages on adoption and the benefits it can bring to children and families.
- **Expanded Adoption Tax Credit Assistance:** This section increases the adoption tax credit from \$10,000 to \$15,000 for all children and makes the credit refundable.
- **Increased Support for the WIC Program:** This section provides states the option to extend certification periods for children, includes language promoting and supporting breastfeeding among women enrolled in WIC, and increases funding for the WIC program.
- **Expanded Nutritional Support for Low-Income Parents:** This section increases household eligibility for the Food Stamp program from up to 30 percent of the

poverty line to up to 85 percent of the poverty line.

- **Increased Funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program:** This section would reauthorize appropriations for the Child Care and Development Block Grant program.
- **Grants for Home Visits by Trained Home Visitors for Low-Income Families:** This grant program is designed to provide free home visits by trained home visitors to low-income families on the health and developmental needs of their infants and toddlers. Trained home visitors must provide services that include research-based information on child health and age-appropriate development, advice on parenting, identification of parenting resources, such as books, videos and parenting workshops in the area, factually and medically accurate and complete information about contraception, and child health and developmental screening.
- **A Public Awareness Campaign Regarding Resources Available to New Parents:** This grant program is designed to promote awareness of resources and support services available to new parents through an advertising campaign and a toll-free telephone line.