



October 14, 2009

The Honorable Senator Debbie Stabenow
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stabenow:

On behalf of The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, I wish to express my sincerest appreciation for your leadership in addressing the health care needs of women and families by offering an amendment to create a new Medicaid Family Planning State Plan Option—an amendment that, as you well know, was accepted into the modified Chairman's mark of the Senate Finance Committee's health reform bill. This policy will allow states that want to expand family planning eligibility to the same eligibility as pregnancy-related care to do so through a state option rather than a waiver. As an organization that focuses on improving child and family well-being by preventing unplanned pregnancy, we support your efforts to make it easier for states to expand access to family planning services.

Studies continue to show that expanding access to Medicaid family planning services not only reduces unplanned pregnancy, but also produces substantial savings as shown in the 27 states that have Medicaid family planning waivers in place. The Congressional Budget Office analysis showed a savings of at least \$700 million over 10 years for a similar provision and at least budget neutrality within the context of the Senate Finance Committee bill and H.R. 3200, even with an underlying Medicaid expansion for childless adults up to 133% of the Federal Poverty Level.

In addition to the cost benefits, helping women and their partners plan for families will help decrease many of the negative health and economic effects of unplanned pregnancy, including late entry into prenatal care, abuse and neglect, behavioral and cognitive deficits, educational challenges, financial hardship, and relationship and family turmoil.

We applaud your commitment to improve the health and well-being of women and families, and look forward to working with you and your colleagues as health reform advances in Congress. If we can be of any assistance, please contact Lisa Shuger at 202-478-8576 or lshuger@thenc.org or Jessica Swafford at 202-478-8529 or jswafford@thenc.org.

Sincerely,



Sarah S. Brown

Responsible behavior. Responsible policies.