



The National Campaign
to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

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For Immediate Release

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Introduction of the Communities of Color Teen Pregnancy Prevention Act of 2010
Statement from The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

The Communities of Color Teen Pregnancy Prevention Act of 2010 (H.R. 5033) was introduced on Capitol Hill at the end of last week by Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA). The legislation offers a research-driven, innovative approach to address existing racial and ethnic disparities in teen pregnancy rates. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy applauds Rep. Roybal-Allard for her commitment to helping young people avoid early pregnancy and encourages Congress to support this and other efforts to address this critical social issue.

At present, 52 percent of Latina teens and 50 percent of African American teen girls will become pregnant at least once before age 20. The birth rate among Native American teens increased 11 percent between 2005 and 2008, the steepest increase of any racial or ethnic group (teen pregnancy rates are not available for this group).

The Communities of Color Teen Pregnancy Prevention Act of 2010 is an important complement to ongoing Congressional efforts to invest in evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs. Specifically the legislation would fund research and demonstration projects for racial and ethnic communities with disproportionately high rates of teen pregnancy.

"This bill provides a much-needed research investment in developing, testing, and refining programs for communities with high rates of teen pregnancy," said Sarah Brown, CEO of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. "While there is a growing list of programs that have been shown to reduce risky sexual behavior among teens, it is critical to continue expanding the menu of approaches available to communities across America, particularly those with some of the greatest needs. Reducing teen pregnancy will help young people complete the education they need to get ahead in this economy."

Another unique feature of this bill is the opportunity to integrate efforts to prevent teen pregnancy with strategies that help build healthy relationships.

Now more than ever, it is important to intensify efforts to reduce teen pregnancy. The teen pregnancy rate increased three percent in 2006—the first increase in the national teen pregnancy rate since 1990—and the teen birth rate has increased 2 percent in recent years. At a time when the nation is focused on improving high school completion, particularly for communities of color, it is worth noting that parenthood is a leading cause of school drop out among teen girls—in one recent study, 30 percent of teen girls cited pregnancy or parenthood as a reason for dropping out of high school.

About The National Campaign

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy seeks to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families. Our specific strategy is to prevent teen pregnancy and unplanned pregnancy among single, young adults. We support a combination of responsible values and behavior by both men and women and responsible policies in both the public and private sectors. If we are successful, child and family well-being will improve. There will be less poverty, more opportunities for young men and women to complete their education or achieve other life goals, fewer abortions, and a stronger nation.

Visit www.TheNationalCampaign.org for more information.

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