

Representative X
ATTN: X
ADDR
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June 7, 2005

Dear Representative X,

As organizations committed to sound science and the health and welfare of our nation's youth, we wish to express our profound concern regarding federal funding levels for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs appropriated through the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies spending bill. The Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies spending bill includes two discretionary abstinence-only-until-marriage programs: the Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) grant program and the Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA). The president's FY'06 budget request proposed increasing funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs by 18.5 percent to \$206 million. The entire increase, \$38 million, is for the Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) account.

We urge you to **spend no new money on abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.**

It is important to note that CBAE-funded programs were the subject of Representative Henry Waxman's report of last December which found that 11 out of the 13 most commonly funded programs contain false, misleading, and distorted information about the risks of sexual activity. To date, the Department of Health and Human Services has not remedied the grave deficiencies uncovered by the report; instead it continues to fund these programs while failing to provide appropriate oversight.

There is also mounting research from the states that abstinence-only-until-marriage programs are ineffective and have little beneficial impact on young people's sexual behavior. Eleven states have now evaluated their federally funded abstinence-only-until-marriage programs and not a single one has found positive, long-term impacts. The president's home state of Texas is among these 11 states and researchers there concluded, "we didn't see any strong indications these programs were having an impact in the direction desired...these programs seem to be much more concerned about politics than kids, and we need to get over that."

In addition, recent research suggests that certain types of abstinence-only-until-marriage initiatives can create harm by undermining contraceptive use when young people in the programs become sexually active. Recent studies, including one released in the March 2005 *Journal of Adolescent Health*, looked at "virginity pledges"—a cornerstone of abstinence-only-until-marriage programs. Simply put, virginity pledges fail. The studies found that young people who took a pledge were one-third less likely to use contraception when they did have sex than their peers who had not pledged. The research also found that pledgers have the same rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as their non-pledging peers but were less likely to seek medical testing and treatment, thereby increasing the possibility of disease transmission.

In the last five fiscal years, funding for CBAE has increased 425 percent—from \$20 million to \$105 million—in spite of the very serious problems explained above. For FY'06, President

Bush has requested yet another increase—to \$143 million—for CBAE. **Given the current fiscal environment and the lack of evidence to support abstinence-only-until-marriage programs, we believe it would be fiscally irresponsible for Congress to spend any new tax dollars on these programs.**

Despite the striking lack of evidence that abstinence-only-until-marriage programs are effective, federal funding has skyrocketed, while funding levels for other public health programs that provide primary health care services to underinsured and uninsured low income Americans have been stagnant at best.

To this end, and especially considering this tight fiscal environment, we urge you to dedicate funding from unproven abstinence-only-until-marriage programs to other worthwhile and chronically underfunded public health programs with proven results, such as programs that promote family planning, HIV prevention, STD prevention and health and medical services for children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ab Gyn Services of Phoenix, Inc. (AZ)
Adolescent and Young Adult Health Program Bronxcare @ Third Avenue (Bronx, NY)
Advocates for Youth
African American Women Evolving, Inc.
AIDS Action Council
AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth & Families
AIDS Foundation of Chicago (IL)
AIDS Institute
AIDS Resource Alliance, Inc. (Williamsport, PA)
AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland (OH)
Alan Guttmacher Institute
Alaska Pro-Choice Alliance
Alaska Women's Lobby
Alliance Medical Center, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Project (Healdsburg, CA)
American Academy of HIV Medicine
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Civil Liberties Union
American Civil Liberties Union of Alaska
American Civil Liberties Union of Idaho
American Civil Liberties Union of Kentucky Reproductive Freedom Project
American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana
American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey
American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California
American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania
American Civil Liberties Union of Texas
American Civil Liberties Union of Vermont
American Counseling Association
American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR)
American Humanist Association

American Medical Student Association (AMSA)
American Social Health Association
Americans for Religious Liberty
Arizona Family Planning Council
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
Basic Rights Oregon
Bay Area Communities for Health Education (CA)
California Adolescent Health Collaborative
California Church IMPACT
California National Organization for Women
Cascade AIDS Project (Portland, OR)
Catholics for a Free Choice
Cedar River Clinics—Feminist Women's Health Center (WA)
Center for American Progress
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)
Center for Human Development (Pleasant Hill, CA)
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for Reproductive Rights
Central New York HIV Care Network
Children's Aid Society, National Adolescent Sexuality and Pregnancy Prevention Training Center
Choice USA
City of Santa Cruz Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women (CA)
Coalition for Comprehensive Sexuality Education (Champaign, IL)
Colorado Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Community Healthcare Network (New York, NY)
Connecticut Coalition for Choice
Cortland Coalition for Choice (Cortland, NY)
Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County (CA)
Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine, Stroger Hospital of Cook County (Chicago, IL)
DuPage National Organization for Women (IL)
Episcopal Church, USA
Episcopal Women's Caucus
Equal Partners in Faith
Exponents (New York, NY)
Family Health Council (Pittsburgh, PA)
Family Health Council of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.
Family Planning Association of Maine
Family Planning Association of Northeast Ohio, Inc.
Family Planning Center of Yates County (Penn Yan, NY)
Family Planning Council (Philadelphia, PA)
Family, Friends, and Neighbors (Boise, ID)
Feminist Majority Foundation
Fort Wayne Feminists (IN)
Fort Wayne National Organization for Women (IN)
Fort Wayne Women's Bureau (IN)
Gay Men's Health Crisis
Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)
Girls Incorporated
Health Access and Privacy Alliance (IN)

Health Services Agency of Santa Cruz County (CA)
Healthy Teen Network
HIV Medicine Association (Alexandria, VA)
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights Watch
Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health
Illinois Maternal & Child Health Coalition
Illinois National Organization for Women
Illinois Parent Teacher Association
Illinois Planned Parenthood Council
Indiana Civil Liberties Union
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Institute for Reproductive Health Access (New York, NY)
Inwood House (New York, NY)
KVC Behavioral HealthCare, Inc. (Kansas City, KS)
Legal Momentum
Long Valley Branch of the American Association of University Women (ID)
Maine Civil Liberties Union
Maine Women's Lobby
Mary Wohlford Foundation
Maternal and Family Health Services, Pennsylvania
Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Action (CA)
Memphis Regional Planned Parenthood (TN)
Metro TeenAIDS
Minnesota AIDS Project
Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting
Monterey Peninsula National Organization for Women (CA)
Ms. Foundation for Women
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NARAL Pro-Choice California
NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri
NARAL Pro-Choice Montana
NARAL Pro-Choice New Jersey Foundation
NARAL Pro-Choice New Mexico
NARAL Pro-Choice New York
NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio
NARAL Pro-Choice Washington
NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin & Foundation
NARAL Pro-Choice Wyoming
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)
National Center for Health Education
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)
National Council of Jewish Women, Palm Beach Section (FL)
National Council of Women's Organizations
National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
National Health Law Program

National Latina Health Organization
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
National Youth Advocacy Coalition
New York AIDS Coalition
New York State Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Northwest Chicago Choice (IL)
Northwest Suburban Illinois National Organization for Women
Northwest Women's Law Center
Okanogan Family Planning (Okanogan, WA)
Pacific Institute for Women's Health (Los Angeles, CA)
Palm Beach County Young Democrats (FL)
Palm Springs Area Chapter of the National Organization for Women (CA)
ParenTeen at Sheridan High School (Sheridan, WY)
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)
PB Consulting (San Francisco, CA)
Plain Truth for Washington Youth
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Indiana
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin
Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California, Inc.
Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southwestern Oregon
Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts
Planned Parenthood Mar Monte (California/Nevada)
Planned Parenthood Minnesota North Dakota South Dakota
Planned Parenthood Northern Michigan
Planned Parenthood of Arkansas and Eastern Oklahoma, Inc.
Planned Parenthood of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.
Planned Parenthood of Chester County (PA)
Planned Parenthood of Connecticut
Planned Parenthood of Delaware
Planned Parenthood of Georgia
Planned Parenthood of Greater Iowa
Planned Parenthood of Hawaii
Planned Parenthood of Indiana
Planned Parenthood of South Central Michigan
Planned Parenthood of South Central New York, Inc.
Planned Parenthood of Southern Arizona, Inc.
Planned Parenthood of the Mid Hudson Valley (NY)
Planned Parenthood of the Palm Beach and Treasure Coast Area, Inc. (FL)
Planned Parenthood of the Rochester/Syracuse Region (NY)
Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin
Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio Region
Population Connection
Population Connection, Monterey Bay Chapter (CA)
Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office

Protestants for the Common Good (Chicago, IL)
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Connecticut, Inc.
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Illinois
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Indiana
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Minnesota
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Missouri
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of New Mexico
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Ohio
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Southern California
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Texas
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of Washington State
Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing
Reproductive Rights Coalition of Monterey County (CA)
Reproductive Rights Network of Santa Cruz County (CA)
Reproductive Rights Project, New York Civil Liberties Union
Republican Majority for Choice
Republican Majority for Choice, New York Chapter
Santa Cruz AIDS Project (CA)
Santa Cruz County Women's Commission (CA)
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)
Sisterhood Mobilized for AIDS/HIV Research & Treatment, Inc. (SMART) (New York, NY)
Southwest Community Health Center (Santa Rosa, CA)
Syracuse Model Neighborhood Facility, Inc. (NY)
TellThem! (SC)
Texas Association of Planned Parenthood Affiliates, Inc.
The National Partnership for Women & Families
The New 3Rs: Rights, Respect, Responsibility (OR)
The Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality
Thomas R. Earley Fund (Indianapolis, IN)
Tri-State Alliance (KY, IL, IN)
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries
University of California, Santa Cruz, Student Health Center, Women's Clinic Staff
Valley Women's Club
Valley Women's Club of the San Lorenzo Valley (Ben Lomond, CA)
Women of Reform Judaism
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Monterey Chapter (CA)
Women's Law Project
Wyoming Health Council
Yates Family Planning Services (Penn Yan, NY)
YWCA of Topeka Teen Pregnancy Prevention (KS)
YWCA USA