

Dear Senator/Representative:

I am writing to urge you to support the **Prevention First Act** (S.20/H.R. 1709), a bill designed to expand access to preventive health care services that help reduce unintended pregnancy, reduce the number of abortions, and improve access to women's health care. Passage of the Prevention First Act is critical in order to provide funding to educate health care providers and women about emergency contraception (EC) - a safe, effective back up birth control method. Emergency contraceptive pills can help reduce the risk of pregnancy by up to 89 percent if taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse or birth control failure. EC works to prevent pregnancy before it begins. It is not the same as RU-486 or Mifeprex®, which terminates an early pregnancy.

Despite strong support from medical professionals and public health officials, EC remains underutilized. Many American women know little about this back-up birth control method - and just 6 percent have ever used it. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that doctors routinely discuss EC and provide it to women to have on hand in case of need, but only 1 in 5 actually do. Still, studies show that *widespread knowledge and use* of EC could prevent as many as half of the 3 million unintended pregnancies that occur each year in the U.S.

Americans recognize the link between information and the ability to make responsible choices. According to a recent poll, more than three-quarters of men and women voters want the government to be involved in providing more complete information about health options so women can make decisions about their medical needs. Moreover, Americans support initiatives to educate the public and providers about their second chance options to prevent unintended pregnancy. Seventy-two percent of voters favor legislation to expand public health information about EC and its availability, including 81 percent of Democrats, 76 percent of Independents and 60 percent of Republicans.

The Prevention First Act (S.20/H.R. 1709) addresses one of our nation's most basic health needs. By supporting the bill, Senator/Representative [Congressperson's name here], you support reducing the number of unintended pregnancies in the U.S., reducing the need for abortion, and promoting the ability of Americans to make informed, responsible decisions about their health.

Sincerely,

[Your Name Here]