

December 14, 2009

The Honorable Melissa Bean  
432 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1308

The Honorable Judy Biggert  
1034 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1313

The Honorable Roland W. Burris  
387 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-1305

The Honorable Jerry F. Costello  
2408 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1312

The Honorable Danny Davis  
2159 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1307

The Honorable Dick Durbin  
309 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-1304

The Honorable Bill Foster  
1339 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1314

The Honorable Luis V. Gutierrez  
2266 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1304

The Honorable Debbie Halvorson  
1541 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1311

The Honorable Phil Hare  
428 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1317

The Honorable Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.  
2419 Rayburn House Office Building  
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The Honorable Timothy V. Johnson  
1207 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1315

The Honorable Mark Kirk  
1030 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1310

The Honorable Dan Lipinski  
1717 Longworth House Office Building  
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The Honorable Don Manzullo  
2228 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1316

The Honorable Mike Quigley  
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The Honorable Peter Roskam  
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The Honorable Bobby L. Rush  
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Washington, D.C. 20515-1301

The Honorable Janice Schakowsky  
2367 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1309

The Honorable Aaron Schock  
509 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1318

The Honorable John Shimkus  
2452 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1319

Dear Illinois Congressional Delegation:

We, the undersigned Illinois agencies and residents, ask you to fund responsible sexuality education programs that promote the health and well-being of Illinois' youth.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (H.R.3590) contains provisions in Sec. 2953 and 2954 to provide funding for both comprehensive sexuality and abstinence-only programs, respectively. In September, the Senate Finance Committee approved two amendments to the health care reform bill. One amendment, proposed by Senator Max Baucus, would provide \$75 million for evidence-based, medically accurate, comprehensive approaches to sex education. The other, proposed by Senator Orrin Hatch, would reinstate \$50 million per year to the failed Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage program.

We applaud the Senate's commitment to allocate money for evidence-based, responsible sexuality education. We are, however, greatly disappointed by its decision to restore funding for Title V abstinence-only programs, which fail to protect the health and welfare of adolescents. As you develop the terms of the final health care reform bill, we ask that you support only programs that promote the well-being of youth.

Abstinence-only programs do not adequately address the sexual health needs of our young people. Such programs prohibit the discussion of contraception and often contain false and misleading information. In Illinois, half of all high school students and over 70 percent of high school seniors have engaged in sexual activity. In 2007, over 18,000 babies were born to adolescent mothers, accounting for more than 10 percent of all Illinois births. Forty percent of Illinois' new Chlamydia and gonorrhea cases are among youth ages 10 to 19. Nationally, 1 in 4 young women has at least one sexually transmitted infection (STI) while 1 in 3 becomes pregnant before the age of 20. Studies have shown that abstinence-only programs fail to decrease students' risk of unintended pregnancy and actually raise their risk of contracting an STI.

In addition to keeping abstinence-only money out of the final health care bill, we urge you to support the Responsible Education About Life (REAL) Act (H.R.1551/S.611), which would provide funding for states to implement comprehensive approaches to sexuality education. Currently, there is no federal funding for responsible sexuality education despite the fact that, since 1998, Congress has obligated more than \$1.5 billion in federal and state matching funds for abstinence-only programs that have been proven ineffective.

According to a recent study of sex education programs commissioned by the National Campaign to Prevent Teenage and Unplanned Pregnancy, programs that provide a strong abstinence message coupled with clear, honest information about STIs, contraception, social pressures, and how and when to obtain health care have been found to be effective at delaying the onset of sexual activity, reducing the number of sexual partners, and increasing the use of contraception among adolescents. Despite strong evidence supporting comprehensive programs, 66 percent of Illinois classrooms are not providing such programs, according to a survey by the National Opinion Research Center. Over 52 percent of surveyed sex education teachers in Illinois do not teach about where to get birth control and health-related services.

The REAL Act would provide funding to states for medically accurate, age-appropriate, comprehensive sexuality education in schools that teach that abstinence is the only certain way to avoid pregnancy or STIs, provide accurate information about the health benefits and side effects of contraceptive and barrier methods, and teach skills for healthy decision-making, including how to avoid and not to make unwanted verbal, physical, and sexual advances.

The health of our youth depends on their ability to make informed choices. In order to reduce STIs and unintended pregnancies and promote a positive approach to adolescent sexual health, we urge you and your colleagues to help put an end to the failed abstinence-only project and lending your support to expand responsible sexuality education initiatives.

If you would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Soo Ji Min, executive director of the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, at [sooji@icah.org](mailto:sooji@icah.org) or 312-427-4460 ext. 225.

Sincerely,

### **Illinois Agencies**

AAUW Illinois  
AAUW Waukegan Area  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Bartlett High School, Bartlett  
Better Existence with HIV, Chicago  
Beyondmedia Education, Chicago  
Calles y Sueños, Chicago  
Carroll County Health Department  
CAVDA – Citizens AIDS Project, Mount Prospect  
Chicago Girls' Coalition  
Chicago Women's AIDS Project  
Chicago Women's Health Center  
Cook County Department of Public Health  
DuPage National Organization for Women  
Gender JUST, Chicago  
Glenbard West High School, Glen Ellyn  
Global Girls, Chicago

Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health  
Illinois Choice Action Team  
Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition  
Illinois PTA  
Illinois Youth Policy Council  
McHenry County Citizens for Choice  
Midwest Access Project, Chicago  
Morton School-Based Health Center, Cicero  
Mujeres Latinas en Acción, Chicago  
National Coalition of American Nuns, Chicago  
National Council of Jewish Women Illinois  
Personal PAC, Chicago  
Ruth M. Rothstein Core Center, Chicago  
Senn High School Health Center, Chicago  
Weed and Seed Program, Decatur  
Young Parent Alliance, Chicago

### **Illinois Residents**

Aaron Duggins, Chicago  
Adrienne Glover, Chicago  
Ahkia Daniels, Chicago  
Aidan Strueber, Chicago  
Alicia Amador, Chicago  
Alissa Eugeni, Chicago  
Amanda ReCupido, Hoffman Estates  
Amanda Speck, Chicago  
Amber DiMascio, Chicago  
Amy Hubbell, Chicago  
Amy Smolensky, Chicago  
Ana Mercado, Chicago  
Anali Vargas, Chicago  
Analiza Austria, Chicago  
Andrew Flechtner, Chicago  
Arden Handler, Evanston  
Arlene Zielke, Oak Lawn

Arlyne Chin, Chicago  
Barbara Hague, Des Plaines  
Beatrice Westrate, Chicago  
Benita Ulisano, Chicago  
Betsy Bowen, Chicago  
Bianca Garrett, Maywood  
Bianca Guider, Chicago  
Bianca Miller, Browning  
Blair Harvey, Chicago  
Brad Hunt, Bartlett  
Bradley Hirsh, Chicago  
Brenda M. Rodriguez, Palatine  
Brienne Callahan, Chicago  
Bronwen White, Chicago  
Bruce Jules Joleaud, Chicago  
Buddy Bell, Chicago  
Callie Czerkie, Chicago

Carol B. Hillman, Chicago  
Carol Lauhon, Chicago  
Carolyn Budz, Willow Springs  
Carolyn Pierce, Chicago  
Carrie Schiff, Chicago  
Caryl A. Safford, RN, Naperville  
Cassandra Di Prizio, Chicago  
Cheryl Darlene Chamberlain, Mokenca  
Christina Obregón, Chicago  
Christopher Johnson, Chicago  
Cristen Adams, Chicago  
Cynthia A. Johnson, Downers Grove  
Cynthia Wolfsonn, Highland Park  
Daisy Zamora, Chicago  
Dan Miltner, Chicago  
Danielle Marie Meyers, Wheeling  
Darlena Tucker, Chicago  
Daryl Allan Ritchie, Lansing  
Dave Sum, Chicago  
Deanna Estes, Chicago  
Debbie Oneill, Carbondale  
Deborah Rissing, Downers Grove  
Debra Hall, Cortland  
Debra Mize, Belleville  
Deloris Manny, Woodstock  
Denise Rushton, Schaumburg  
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Diane Balin, Riverside  
Diane Kessler, Flossmoor  
Diane Riesen, Glen Ellyn  
Donna Jean Sproston, Monmouth  
Donna K Erickson, Aurora  
Dr. Loren Hutter, Wilmette  
Dr. Michael Fagen, Evanston  
Dr. Sanmit K. Basu, Chicago  
Dr. Susan J. Altfeld, Highland Park  
Dylan Binder, Evanston  
Eduardo Nuñez, Berwyn  
Elinor D. Flanigan, Downers Grove  
Elizabeth A. Harding, Chicago  
Elizabeth Ann Petre, Carbondale  
Elizabeth Sidenbender, Aurora  
Ellen Sadur, Chicago  
Emele Peters, Crystal Lake  
Emily Litwin, Chicago  
Emily Manes, Chicago  
Emily Swartz, Vernon Hills

Emma Rubin, Chicago  
Erin Jaworski, Chicago  
Erin Watson, Chicago  
Esmeralda Roman, Chicago  
Faye Marcus, Rockford  
Fernando Blasco, Chicago  
Fernando Martinez, Chicago  
Gareth Collins, Winnetka  
Gary Gulley, Chicago  
Gladys L. Croom, Chicago  
Grace Pears, Chicago  
Haley Leibovitz, Buffalo Grove  
Hannah Jaracz, Plainfield  
Hannah Jo Rhoades, Auburn  
Heather D. Scheid, Freeburg  
Helen Ramirez-Odell, Chicago  
Herminia Vanna, Chicago  
Hilary Ward, Chicago  
Howard Mirsky, Mount Prospect  
Ivan Ewert, Crystal Lake  
Ivan Gallardo, Chicago  
J. Goforth, Chicago  
James Barnes, Arlington Heights  
Jamie Huber, Carbondale  
Jamiko Rose, Chicago  
Jan Douglass, Belleville  
Jennifer Pagonis, Chicago  
Jennifer VanderPloeg, Chicago  
Jewel Sobeck, Batavia  
Joanna Jamerson, Chicago  
Jody Adler, Highland Park  
Johnathan Mayberry, Normal  
Jordan Luke, Decatur  
Jovan Odum, Riverdale  
Juan Chavez, Aurora  
Judith E. Gallagher, Carpentersville  
Judith Vandenboom, Cary  
Julia Fedor, Chicago  
Julie Walther, Chicago  
Kassandra Soderstrom, Lombard  
Katharine Boisseau, Chicago  
Katherine Braun, Chicago  
Katherine Romeo, Chicago  
Katherine Spoden, Peoria  
Kathleen Burke, LaGrange  
Kathleen Thompson, Evanston  
Kathryn H. Fishman, Northfield

Kathryn Smiley, Evanston  
Kathy Chan, Chicago  
Katrina Ewert, Chicago  
Kayla Craig, Chicago  
Kelly Suzanne Saulsberry, Chicago  
Kenneth Jones, Chicago  
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Kim Robeza, Staunton  
Kristin Pulatie, Chicago  
Kristina Voss, Chicago  
Lacinda Hummel, Chicago  
Lara Brooks, Chicago  
Lara Burrows, Chicago  
Laura Labeledz, Arlington Heights  
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Lauri Safford, Urbana  
Leah Greenblum, Chicago  
Lilah Handler, Chicago  
Lillian Pontius-Goldblatt, Chicago  
Linda P. Miller, Chicago  
Lisa Jaburek, Chicago  
Lisa Junkin, Chicago  
Lisa M. Knauf, Addison  
Lisa Marie Pickens, Chicago  
Lise E. Jankowski, RN, MS, Bloomington  
Lori Noel Moody, Chicago  
Lorraine Akane Kumagai, Westmont  
Louise Gutman, Waukegan  
Lucky Mosqueda, Chicago  
Lynne Johnson, Chicago  
Macaire Grambauer, Chicago  
Maggie Olsen, Roselle  
Mairita Smiltars, Chicago  
Manie Grewal, Chicago  
Margaret Aguilar, Chicago  
Margaret Schultz, Chicago  
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Maria Castillo, Stickney  
Mariah Pearl Cunnick, Chicago  
Maribel Navarro, Chicago  
Marvinetta Woodley-Penn, Chicago  
Mary Atwater, Glen Ellyn  
Mary Ewert, Crystal Lake  
Mary Hart, Chicago  
Matthew Graham, Chicago  
Maureen Chambers, Bartlett

Mayadet Patitucci Cruz, Chicago  
Megan Erskine, Chicago  
Melissa Iverson, Chicago  
Melissa Sanders, Chicago  
Michael Cygan, Chicago  
Michael McFadden, Chicago  
Michelle Emery, Chicago  
Michelle Fadeley, Wheaton  
Michelle Lambing, Chicago  
Missi Sanders, Edwardsville  
Molly Cummins, Carterville  
Molly McLay, Sherman  
Mona Luxion, Chicago  
Nadine Peacock, Oak Park  
Nancy Hoetker, Champaign  
Nancy K. Barrett, Chicago  
Nancy Sage, Springfield  
Nat Duran, Chicago  
Natalie Simons, Bartlett  
Natalie Talbert, Lake Forest  
Nathan Mandell, Chicago  
Neusa Gaytan, Chicago  
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Nicole Goss, Chicago  
Nicole Perez, Chicago  
Nikki Zaleski, Chicago  
Patricia Daugherty, Aurora  
Patrice Jones, Chicago  
Philene Lortz, Lisle  
Pleasant Ambrose Radford Jr., Park Forest  
Rachel Hoge, Tinley Park  
Rae Charnelle Wright, Chicago  
Rebecca L. Walker, Groveland  
Rebecca Manthe, Chicago  
Rebecca R. Allen, Bartlett  
Rebecca Rice, Mundelein  
Rhita Lippitz, Evanston  
Rhonda Bell, Chicago  
Robin Schmidt, Chicago  
Ronna Stamm, Evanston  
Russell Ruch, Chicago  
Ryan Frascione, East Peoria  
Sabrina Edmiston, Astoria  
Salinda Belander, Savanna  
Salome Chasnoff, Chicago  
Sam Finkelstein, Chicago  
Samantha Parra, Chicago

Sara Tivers, Volo  
Sarajane Johnson, Chicago  
Sheena Panoor, Chicago  
Sheila Feeney, Algonquin  
Sheryol Threewit, Decatur  
Sonia Cervantes, Aurora  
Sonia Stevens, Chicago  
Sonja Rotenberg, Chicago  
Soo Ji Min-Maranda, Chicago  
Stacey Horn, Oak Park  
Stephanie Young, Chicago  
Suja Shunmugavelu, Chicago  
Tamara D. Lentz, Charleston  
Taquita Brown, Chicago  
Tasasha Henderson, Chicago

Tea Sefer, Chicago  
Terrance Hooker, Maywood  
Terry Cosgrove, Chicago  
Terry Satinover Fagen, Chicago  
Terry Wolff, South Elgin  
Therese Quinn, Chicago  
Tiara McHenry, Chicago  
Timothea Papas, Evanston  
Valerie Webb, St. Charles  
Vanessa Beck, Chicago  
Veronica Lozano, Chicago  
Vivian Barrett, Chicago  
Zahra Alabanza, Chicago  
Zoë Lehman, Chicago