

February 18, 2013

The Honorable John Boehner
Office of the Speaker of the House
of Representatives
United States Capitol, H-232
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Democratic Leader of the
House of Representatives
United States Capitol, H-204
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Office of the Democratic Leader of the
Senate
United States Capitol, S-221
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Office of the Republican Leader of the
Senate
United States Capitol, S-230
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representatives Boehner and Pelosi, and Senators Reid and McConnell:

As local, state, and national organizations dedicated to the health and success of youth in this country, we urge Congress to continue funding for the Office of Adolescent Health's (OAH) Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program and the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP). Since the programs were first funded in Fiscal Year 2010, more than 150 organizations across the country have received competitive grants, and 45 states as well as D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia have received formula grants for programs that help reduce teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), as well as equip youth with the skills to lead productive lives. Together, these multi-year grantees are well on the way to serving approximately 1.3 million youth through 2014. While Congress grapples with budget challenges and works on funding for both the remainder of FY 2013 and for FY 2014, it is essential to preserve the funding and maintain the existing commitment to evidence in these programs.

The OAH Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program and PREP emphasize evidence and evaluation, supporting programs that work at a time when progress on the challenge of reducing teen pregnancy remains critical. Though teen pregnancy rates have declined by 42% since the early 1990s, it is still the case that nearly three in ten girls in this country will become pregnant before the age of 20. The United States has the highest rate of teen pregnancies in the developed world—more than 700,000 pregnancies to teens each year. At a time when the U.S. needs to become more competitive in the global economy, our teen pregnancy rates are still much higher than our trading partners and competitors, putting us at a disadvantage.

Moreover, reducing teen pregnancy saves money. A study by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy found that in 2008 alone, teen childbearing cost U.S.

taxpayers at least \$10.9 billion. The same study estimated that the U.S. realized \$8.4 billion in savings because of the declines in the teen birth rate between 1991 and 2008. An analysis by the Brookings Institution determined that replicating effective teen pregnancy prevention programs such as those supported by the OAH grants and PREP are cost-beneficial—in other words, these federal outlays save more public funding than they cost.

Furthermore, a 2012 survey found that most adults (72%) believe that federal funds for preventing teen pregnancy should primarily support those programs that have been proven to change behavior related to teen pregnancy. Nearly eight in ten adults (78%) say more efforts to prevent teen pregnancy are needed in their community and demand for evidence-based programs far outweighs supply. For example, 1,100 organizations submitted applications for the OAH funding in FY 10 and OAH only had sufficient funding to make 100 grants.

Initiatives to reduce teen pregnancy contribute to progress on a host of other critical issues that are important to Americans, such as ensuring that each young person in this country can complete his or her education. Less than half of teen parents (40%) go on to finish high school, and less than two percent will complete college by the time they turn 30. More than four-fifths of adults and teens say that reducing teen pregnancy is a very effective way to reduce the high school dropout rate and improve academic achievement.

Evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs represent important efforts by the federal government to address the nation's high rates of teen pregnancy. We hope that you will stand with the many groups below to protect this funding that will improve the lives of youth and future generations, while reducing public sector costs.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

Advocates for Youth
The AIDS Institute
America's Promise Alliance
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of University Women
(AAUW)
American Congress of Obstetricians and
Gynecologists
American Social Health Association
Association of Maternal and Child Health
Programs

Children's Aid Society Carrera Program
The Dibble Institute
The Emily Program
Feminist Majority
Girls Inc.
Healthy Teen Network
March of Dimes
The National Alliance to Advance
Adolescent Health
National Association of County Human
Services Administrators

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and
Unplanned Pregnancy
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Coalition of 100 Black Women,
Inc.
National Coalition of Pastors' Spouses
National Coalition of STD Directors
(NCSD)
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of La Raza
The National Crittenton Foundation
National Family Planning & Reproductive
Health Association
National Network for Youth
National Organization for Women
National Hispanic Christian Leadership
Conference

National Women's Law Center
The New Evangelical Partnership for the
Common Good
Partnership for Prevention
People For the American Way
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Connection
Progressive Policy Institute
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Institute
The Society for Adolescent Health and
Medicine

Sexuality Information and Education
Council of the United States
Third Way
Wyman Center

State and Local Organizations

411 Teen Health (Decatur, IL)
A Positive Approach to Teen Health
(PATH, Inc.) (Valparaiso, IN)
Adolescent Medicine, Pediatrics, Keck
School of Medicine, University of
Southern California (Los Angeles, CA)
Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign
of North Carolina (APPCNC)
Allen Women's Health (Waterloo, IA)
Cabarrus Partnership for Children (Concord,
NC)
California Association of School Health
Educators
California Family Health Council
Central Montana Family Planning
(Lewistown, MT)
Child Abuse Prevention Association/CAPA
(Beaufort, SC)
Community Connections Resource Center
(Louisville, KY)
Concilio Latino de Salud, Inc.(Phoenix, AZ)

Coronado High School Cal-SAFE Program
(West Covina, CA)
Dedicated Individually to Valiantly Assist
(D.I.V.A.), Incorporated (Columbia, SC)
Department of Global and Community
Health, George Mason University
(Fairfax, VA)
East Valley Community Health Center
(Pomona and West Covina, CA)
Family Planning Association of Northeast
Ohio, Inc. (Painesville, OH)
Family Planning Plus of SUN & MJ
Counties (Lewisburg, PA)
Family Service Agency of San Francisco
Family Support Hawaii (Kailua-Kona, HI)
Hale `Opio Kaua'i, Inc. (Lihu'e, HI)
Hartford Action Plan on Infant Health, Inc
(Hartford, CT)
Healthy Family Initiatives (Houston, TX)
Healthy Teens Coalition of Manatee
County, FL

Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (CA)
Image Means Everything (Houston, TX)
Investing In Our Youth, Inc. (Quincy, FL)
Joshua Blessings Pregnant, Parenting, Homeless (PPH) Youth Programs (Dallas, TX)
Kaizen Corporation for Children & Families: Princesses within Motherhood (Pontiac, MI)
Legacy 4 Kids LLC (Napa, CA)
LifeWorks (Austin, TX)
New Haven Public Schools (New Haven, CT)
New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community
NIA Management (Elkhart, IN)
NorthCare Promise Place Program (Oklahoma City, OK)
Okanogan Family Planning (Omak, WA)
Ottawa Youth Sexual Coalition (Holland, MI)
Parents Anonymous of Tyler Inc. (Tyler, TX)
Partners for Successful Youth – Lucas County, Ohio Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition
Petaluma Health Center (Petaluma, CA)
Philemon Ministries (Apopka, FL)
Planned Parenthood of South Florida and the

Treasure Coast, Inc. (West Palm Beach, FL)
Project Single Moms Worldwide Inc. (Newport News, VA)
Project-U-Turn Inc. (Detroit, MI)
Rockford MELD (Rockford, IL)
Rum River Health Services, Inc (Princeton, MN)
South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
STEPP Program (Truckee, CA)
Stockton Unified Early Childhood Education Cal-SAFE (Stockton, CA)
Teen Futures (Pasadena, CA)
Mount Toro High School Salinas Union High School District Teen Parent Program Cal-SAFE (Salinas, CA)
The Rhode Island Alliance
Together For Youth (Waterloo, IA)
Valley Community Clinic (North Hollywood, CA)
Washington County Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition (Hagerstown, MD)
West Central District Health Department (North Platte, NE)
Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Marks, MS)