

How far has Congress drifted from the rest of America?



What Americans want... and what Congress does:

- ✔ Over 70% of Americans favor more public funding for family planning...
Congress won't adequately fund it.
- ✔ Two out of three Americans support confidential teen access to family planning...
Congress tries to block it.
- ✔ Over 60% of Americans favor requiring health plans to cover contraceptive methods...
Congress doesn't act.
- ✔ 82% of Americans want sex education in schools...
Congress spends millions of tax dollars on one-sided programs that teach only abstinence.
- ✔ Two out of three Americans believe abortion should remain accessible to women...
Congress tries to block access to abortion.

Congress has drifted away from the rest of us when it comes to family planning, responsible sex education, and a woman's right to choose abortion.

The vast majority of Americans believe that decisions about these personal, private matters should be left up to individuals, their families, and their doctors.

But apparently Congress listens only to an isolated few who want to impose their choices on everyone else.

Planned Parenthood is working to put America's values into action. Our *Responsible Choices* Action Agenda advocates new state and federal policies that prevent unintended pregnancy, improve reproductive health care, ensure access to abortion, and protect our ability to make our *own* choices.

We give you the chance to make your voice heard. And show our legislators the way back home.



"We must translate the American social consensus on family planning and reproductive health into a political consensus — and give all Americans access to the information and services they need to make responsible choices."

—GLORIA FELDT, President
Planned Parenthood
Federation of America

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To find out how to support our *Responsible Choices* Action Agenda, contact Planned Parenthood Federation of America at 810 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019 • 212-261-4302 • www.plannedparenthood.org

Should Congress come between you and family planning?



88% of American voters think family planning is vitally important. So why doesn't Congress? Millions of American women rely on publicly funded family planning programs like Title X for services so effective they prevent hundreds of thousands of unintended pregnancies and abortions every year. And save at least \$3 in Medicaid costs for every dollar invested.

Maybe that's why three out of four Americans want family planning funding increased. And why two-thirds think teens should receive confidential family planning services like everyone else. But Congress isn't listening.

Instead they fail to fund family planning programs adequately. Threaten patient confidentiality. Waste time debating crippling amendments. Act in ways most of us would consider totally irresponsible.

You can change that through our *Responsible Choices* Action Agenda. It urges Congress to fully support these programs now. Because when it comes to family planning, delay is one method that just doesn't work.



"Women and men can make responsible choices when they have access to a full range of family planning services. Planned Parenthood is taking the lead in ensuring that every American can obtain this essential information and health care."

—GLORIA FELDT, President
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Does your health plan treat sex like a “pre-existing condition”?



75% of Americans want health insurance plans to treat birth control like any other prescription. But insurers continue to ignore the importance of pregnancy prevention and women’s sexual health.

Only one-third of fee-for-service health insurance plans covering other prescriptions will pay for birth control pills. And health plans that cover outpatient care deny coverage for outpatient medical services that prevent unintended pregnancy.

The unfairness is obvious. Family planning is women’s most common health care need. The failure of health insurers to cover it helps explain why women spend 68% more on out-of-pocket medical costs than men do.

You can complain to your employer or your insurance company. But the problem could be solved once and for all if Congress would simply require health insurers to cover contraception as they do other prescriptions.

That’s an important part of the Planned Parenthood *Responsible Choices* Action Agenda, our national strategy to make sure everyone who needs reproductive health care gets it.

Because when it comes to birth control, you’re paying too high a price.



“Safe, effective birth control has been protecting women’s health for generations. Now, as the 21st Century nears, family planning should be fully accessible to anyone who chooses it.”

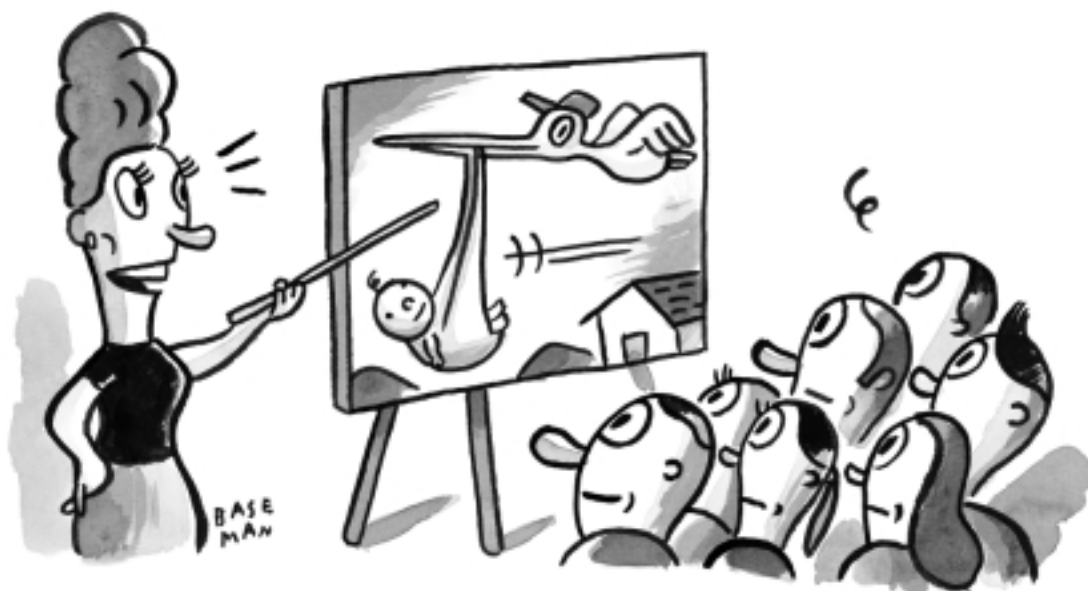
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The first lesson you learn about sex should be fact, not fiction.



82% of Americans want our schools to teach sex education. But thanks to Congress, schools and other institutions in your community may be denying young people the information they need.

In fact, Congress recently approved millions of tax dollars for biased programs that teach *only* abstinence and forbid even the mention of birth control.

What does this teach us? That Congress doesn't think kids deserve honesty about sex. And it won't take real responsibility even when our children's futures are at stake.

It is essential that we teach teens how to abstain from sex — *and* give them all the facts about their bodies, contraception, reproductive health, and responsible decision-making.

Members of Congress have a lot to learn about sex education. You can help teach them by signing on to the Planned Parenthood *Responsible Choices* Action Agenda, which promotes honest, responsible sex education and pregnancy prevention programs.

If we want teenagers to make responsible choices about sex, let's start by telling them the truth.



"Parents want their children to learn a sense of responsibility. It's time that our politicians got the same message. We can't expect kids to make responsible choices if we don't give them the facts."

—GLORIA FELDT, President
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Do 535 politicians know better than a woman and her doctor?



66% of Americans — two out of three — believe it is important that abortion remain accessible. Yet, in the last year alone, Congress has voted more than a dozen times to block access to abortion.

They've banned abortion coverage for federal employees and low-income women. They've denied access to women soldiers — even if they pay for the abortion themselves. Now Congress is trying to ban new early medical abortion methods, including the one commonly known as RU-486. They want to bar teens from turning to a responsible adult if they can't talk to their parents about abortion. And they're trying to outlaw the safest and most common forms of abortion.

Meanwhile, Congress does little to *prevent* the need for abortion. Half of U.S. pregnancies are unintended. Yet Congress actively undermines family planning and honest sex education, and fails to guarantee health insurance coverage of contraception.

The Planned Parenthood *Responsible Choices* Action Agenda seeks to ensure that women and their families have access to a full range of choices, including safe, legal abortion.

That's a personal, medical, and moral decision, after all. Not a political one.



“Planned Parenthood believes that you, not politicians, should make the personal, medical, and moral decision whether and when to have a child. And you ought to have access to all the information and health care services that make prevention of unintended pregnancy possible.”

—GLORIA FELDT, President
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Will Congress use “hush money” to endanger women’s lives overseas?



77% of Americans believe that all the women and men in the world who want birth control should be able to get it. But, right now, Congress is aiming to destroy the very programs that help the most — they are trying to buy the silence of family planning providers.

Funding for international family planning programs is a tiny part of the U.S. budget. Yet this support is hugely important for family planning providers struggling to give the world’s women the means to prevent unintended pregnancies and gain access to quality health care. An estimated 150,000 women’s lives could be saved every year if family planning were widely available.

Tragically, Congress is on the path to harming, not helping, women around the world. U.S. law already bans using federal funds to pay for abortion services overseas. But anti-family planning forces want to use the abortion issue to undermine programs that actually prevent abortion and improve women’s health. Their latest undemocratic tactic? Trying to deny U.S. assistance to family planning providers who mention the word abortion in public — even if they do so with their own funds.

A congressional vote on international family planning is imminent. Our *Responsible Choices* Action Agenda urges Congress to strongly support these life-saving programs — and to reject “hush money” restrictions once and for all.



“U.S. assistance for family planning overseas is a lifeline for millions of women striving to care for themselves and their children. It is only natural — given our traditions of free speech and democracy — for America to take the lead in encouraging open discussion of compelling health issues central to the survival of families worldwide.”

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