

The Contraceptive ACCESS Act

Advancing Contraception Coverage and Economic Security in our State

Sen. Chandler, *SD 939* | Reps. Pat Haddad & John Scibak, *HD 450*

**Because every woman should have access
to the birth control that's right for her**

All women should be able to access the preventive care they need

Contraception is basic, preventive health care that every woman should be able to access, regardless of her economic status. Almost all women, 99% in fact, have used birth control at some point in their lives. Yet prohibitively expensive co-pays and out-of-pocket expenses can make a woman's ability to protect her health and plan her family impossible, especially for the most vulnerable in our communities.

Affordable Care Act protections are under threat

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) guarantees women access to preventive health care, including birth control, without co-pays. The elimination of out-of-pocket costs has allowed over 55 million women in the United States, including 1.4 million women in Massachusetts, to afford the birth control option that works best for them — regardless of their economic status. This vital access is under serious threat on the federal level, with Republican leadership in Congress vowing to repeal the ACA and get rid of access to birth control with no cost sharing.

Massachusetts must safeguard coverage

This bill will safeguard the 1.4 million Massachusetts women who currently have access to no-copay birth control, and expand coverage. It would require insurers to cover all of birth control products, not just one in each category (e.g., implant, IUD, sterilization, and hormonal birth control). It would also prevent insurers from interfering with women's medical decisions by requiring them to try and "fail" multiple methods of birth control (which could include pregnancy or medical complications) before authorizing coverage for a potentially more effective form of birth control, such as an IUD. Such medical interference denies or delays a woman's access to her preferred method of birth control, not only limiting reproductive autonomy, but potentially leading to lapsed or inconsistent contraceptive use and increased risk of unintended pregnancy. Additionally, the bill would eliminate cost-sharing for contraception, voluntary sterilization, and contraceptive counseling for men.

Stand up for women and lead the nation

No woman should be forced to pay out-of-pocket just to get the right birth control for her. Decisions regarding birth control methods are best left to doctors and their patients – not their insurance companies. By passing the Contraceptive ACCESS Act, Massachusetts can continue to lead the nation in reducing unintended pregnancies and improving health care access.

