

March 7, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
Energy & Commerce Committee
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC

Senator Orrin Hatch
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC

The Honorable Michael Burgess
Chairman
Energy & Commerce Committee
Subcommittee on Health
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC

Senator Pat Toomey
Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
Subcommittee on Health
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC

Dear Chairmen Walden, Hatch, Burgess and Toomey:

As you undertake a wide range of important issues this year, we ask you to remember a small, but significant program under your jurisdiction as chairmen – the Title V Abstinence Education Program.

Set to expire on September 30, 2017, the Title V program fits within the priorities of both Congress and the President to promote self-reliance and personal responsibility. We respectfully request that you reauthorize the Title V block grant early in 2017, so that states can efficiently plan and give youth the skills for sexual risk avoidance (SRA), achieving future goals, and developing habits of self-regulation.

As you reauthorize Title V, we urge you to make the following improvements to the program:

- Replace current legislative language with language from the Healthy Relationships Act to take advantage of new research and the public health mandates that help youth thrive.
- Include administrative and technical assistance monies so that communities learn how to communicate the SRA message with the greatest impact.
- Rename the program to Youth Empowerment Program, giving the program a more positive and accurate description than the current “abstinence education” title.

- Permit state-specific organizations to compete for unused funds in states where governors refuse to offer Title V to their youth.
- Remove the state match, consistent with PREP, the “comprehensive” risk reduction sex education block grant.

Early reauthorization, with the suggested improvements to the program, will increase the number of students who receive this important program, remove current discriminatory practices by governors to restrict student access to SRA education, and give states a several-month runway to continue these programs in a seamless manner.

The Title V program is even more relevant than when it was first begun in 1996. Why? Because, today, most teens have not had sex. Far fewer, in fact, than any time in the past twenty-five years. This is good news.

Please look for opportunities early in 2017 to reauthorize Title V, with all the suggested improvements. Thank you for your consideration of this request. And thank you for your commitment to the health and future prospects of our youth.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American College of Pediatricians
Michelle Cretella, MD, FCP
President

American Family Association
Tim Wildmon
President

Ascend
Valerie Huber
President & CEO

Care Net
Roland C. Warren
President & CEO

Children’s AIDS Fund International
Anita M. Smith
President

Christian Medical & Dental Associations
David Stevens, MD, MA (Ethics)
Chief Executive Officer

Concerned Women for America
Penny Nance
CEO & President

Expose Sex Ed Now
Mary McLellan

Family Policy Alliance
Paul Weber
President & CEO

Family Research Council
Tony Perkins
President

Family Watch International
Sharon Slater
President

Human Coalition
Brian Fisher
President & Co-Founder

Institute for Youth Development
Shepherd Smith
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Medical Institute
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Carol Everett
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USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage,
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Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, OFM
Cap Archbishop of Philadelphia

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State Organizations

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