

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

Children’s AIDS Fund International  
Anita M. Smith  
President

American Family Association  
Tim Wildmon  
President

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

Ascend  
Valerie Huber  
President & CEO

Concerned Women for America  
Penny Nance  
CEO & President

Care Net  
Roland C. Warren  
President & CEO

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  
President

Medical Institute  
Freda M. Bush, M.D, FACOG  
President & CEO

The Heidi Group  
Carol Everett  
CEO

USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage,  
Family Life and Youth  
Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, OFM  
Cap Archbishop of Philadelphia

V5 Initiative  
Cristina Burelli  
Executive Director

### **State Organizations**

Alaska Family Action  
Jim Minnery  
President

Carteret Protect Our Students  
Janet Oehl  
Co-Chair

Center for Arizona Policy  
Cathi Herrod  
President

Christian Civic League of Maine  
Carroll Conley  
Executive Director

Citizens for Community Values (OH)  
Aaron Baer  
President

Colorado Family Action  
Debbie Chaves  
Executive Director

Concerned Parents and Educators  
Meg Kilgannon  
Executive Director

Delaware Family Policy Council  
Nicole Theis  
President

Family Action of Tennessee, Inc.  
David Fowler  
President

Family Institute of Connecticut Action  
Peter Wolfgang  
President

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Family Policy Alliance of Kansas  
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Family Policy Alliance of North Dakota  
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