

The Public Affairs Pulse

Keeping You on Top of Legislative & Advocacy Issues

FDA Required to Make Plan B Available to All

NEW YORK — On April 5, U.S. District Court Judge Edward Korman ordered the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to make emergency contraception available over-the-counter to women of all ages, marking a major win for public health and women's rights. In his decision, Judge Korman ordered the FDA to make levonorgestrel-based emergency contraception available over-the-counter without an age or point-of-sale restriction.

The order was issued in response to the Center for Reproductive Rights' (CRR) renewed lawsuit against the agency seeking to expand over-the-counter access to all brands of the morning-after pill, including Plan B One-Step and Next Choice, to women of all ages.

The lawsuit is in response to the surprising 2011 decision by Health and Human Service Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, with President Obama's support, to reject the FDA's request that Plan B be made available over the counter.

Before the decision, Plan B One-Step (levonorgestrel — Teva) required a prescription for girls younger than 17 years. And even for women aged 17 years and older, Plan B One-Step could only be purchased at a pharmacy and required government-issued proof of age, according to the ruling. This decision removes barriers to accessing this important contraceptive option for all women — regardless of age.

This decision does not apply to other emergency contraceptive methods, such as *ella*. The federal government can still appeal the decision.

President Obama Addresses Planned Parenthood National Conference

WASHINGTON, DC — On Friday, April 26, President Obama became the first sitting president to address Planned Parenthood at the PPFAs National Annual Conference in Washington, DC. He made clear that he appreciates the essential role that Planned Parenthood plays in keeping women and families healthy. He understands that every day Planned Parenthood staff and volunteers are making this nation healthier and happier — providing lifesaving preventive care that ensures that no one goes without basic health care, cancer screening or contraception they need. His main messages were clear: "Thank You" and "I'm with you."

President Obama also discussed the important role that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will play in improving the health of our country — including the health of patients who rely on Planned Parenthood health centers every day. In addition to sharing some of the benefits women will enjoy from the ACA, he also made clear that he needs our help to educate our patients and community about these changes to our health care system.

View the full speech at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=104K0IGlpB0>

PPAM Hosts Students for Lobby Days

LANSING — Twice in April, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan (PPAM) hosted statewide lobby days for young people.

On April 10, teens from Peer Education and advocacy groups across the state came together to learn about campaigning and lobbying for issues important to them. Rep. Jim Ananich (D-Flint) visited the group during lunch and talked to them about his journey to the State House. Each group then met with their local Representative or Senator.



On April 16, lobby day was repeated with college students from Students For Choice campus groups. The college students met with their Representatives and Senators to educate them on the importance of Medicaid Expansion, an issue that they have been working on at home on their campuses. Medicaid Expansion has been left out of the budgets of both the House and the Senate and will now go to Conference Committee.