

Testimony in Support of H7255- No-Cost Contraception

House Committee on Finance

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Ciara De Fex, Senior in highschool at Youthbuild Preparatory Academy

My name is Ciara De Fex, and I'm here in support of Representative Alzates H7255 which would require every individual or group health insurance contract effective on or after January 1, 2025, to provide coverage to the insured and the insured's spouse and dependents for all FDA- approved contraceptive drugs, devices and other products.

One of the United States biggest health problems are unintended pregnancies. According to the Washington University School of Medicine, about 50% of all pregnancies that occur in the US are not planned, and more than 90% of abortions occur due to unintended pregnancy. ([Access to free birth control reduces abortion rates – Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis \(wustl.edu\)](https://www.wustl.edu/healthcare/news/2019/05/20/free-birth-control-reduces-abortion-rates))

As a 17 year old in highschool I know so many young girls my age or younger who are teen moms. Although a baby is a blessing, it does derail your life and I can only imagine how hard it must be to juggle between school, work , and providing for a kid while you're still a kid. This also goes for unemployed women who are struggling to feed their own kids. There are a lot of ways to prevent these things from happening but free contraceptive care needs to be a priority. Teenagers should be able to go to their doctors and ask for birth control without having to be charged because a lot of teenagers are not financially able to, as well as their parents. What comes along with not financially being able to afford birth control comes with poverty in families with teen pregnancy of all income levels. This is why I feel it is important to make contraceptive drugs, devices and other products available for free for young women like me. Please pass H7255.