



Alex Moore, Political Director

SEIU 1199NE

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Providence, RI 02909

May 13, 2024

**Subject: Strong Support for the Protect Access to Affordable Contraception Bill (H-7255)**

Dear Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance,

On behalf of SEIU 1199NE, representing 5,000 healthcare, child care, and service sector workers across Rhode Island, I am writing to express our strong support for the Protect Access to Affordable Contraception Bill (H-7255), sponsored by Representative Karen Alzate. This legislation is crucial for providing comprehensive access to contraception, which is vital for the well-being and economic security of our members and the communities they serve.

The passage of this bill would greatly benefit our members by ensuring that all FDA-approved contraceptive methods are covered by insurance without cost-sharing. This includes over-the-counter contraceptives, which are essential for promoting autonomy and easing access to birth control, especially for those who may face barriers due to work schedules or healthcare access issues.

For example, many of our members, such as nursing assistants and child care providers, work irregular hours and find it challenging to schedule medical appointments during standard clinic operating hours. The requirement for insurance coverage of over-the-counter contraceptives without a prescription, as stipulated by this bill, would be a significant advancement for our members. It would allow them to access birth control more conveniently at pharmacies, grocery stores, or online, ensuring they can obtain these critical health products without delay or additional financial burden.

Furthermore, the bill's provision for Medicaid coverage of a 12-month supply of contraceptives aligns with the needs of our members who rely on Medicaid for their healthcare. This would reduce gaps in contraceptive use, which is often a result of supply limitations, thereby enhancing continuous access to necessary reproductive healthcare services.

In light of the ongoing national debates surrounding healthcare and reproductive rights, it is more imperative than ever that Rhode Island takes a stand to protect and expand access to contraception. By supporting this bill, you will be taking a crucial step towards safeguarding the health, economic stability, and rights of thousands of Rhode Islanders, including our members.

We urge you to pass the Protect Access to Affordable Contraception Bill and help ensure that comprehensive and accessible contraceptive care is a reality for all Rhode Islanders.

Thank you for considering this critical piece of legislation. We look forward to seeing its positive impact on the lives of our members and their families.

Sincerely,

Alex Moore