



March 14, 2023

Dear Chair Oliverson, Vice Chair Johnson, and Committee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 916, which requires Texas health plans to cover a year's supply of birth control at one time—and ensures that Texas women consistently have ready access to the contraceptive method that works best for them.

Every Body Texas is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that every person in Texas can access safe, unbiased, high-quality sexual and reproductive healthcare. As the statewide Title X Family Planning Program grantee for Texas, Every Body Texas funds a diverse network of over 30 agencies—including federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), public health departments, hospital-based clinics, and free-standing family planning clinics—that serve nearly 200,000 clients at more than 150 service sites throughout Texas.

Our colleagues in the Texas Women's Healthcare Coalition have noted in their testimony the overwhelming evidence that **providing a full year's supply of birth control increases the likelihood of continued use and lowers the chances of skipping a dose (and risking unplanned pregnancy)**. They have also noted that any additional cost associated with the provision of a full year supply is offset in the long term by cost savings to the state associated with averted Medicaid births—as reported by the Legislative Budget Board during the 86th session.

HB 916 improves continuity of care for Texas women regardless of where they live but is particularly vital for rural women. Many of the clinics in our network are the only source of preventive healthcare in their rural communities. Those providers regularly tell us that their clients drive long distances to their clinics—often hours—for basic care including prenatal and postpartum care, STI testing and treatment, and birth control. Requiring women to travel hours for care and then return every 1-3 months for refills puts them at risk for method disruption and unplanned pregnancy.

Moreover, **a twelve-month supply of birth control is already available to some Texas women. Clients of the Healthy Texas Women—one of Texas's most important safety net programs—are already able to obtain a whole year's supply at a single visit.** This legislation would simply extend that option to Texans with private insurance or Medicaid coverage.

HB 916 represents a common sense, straightforward way to support Texas women and their families. Increased contraceptive consistency will result in fewer unplanned pregnancies,



healthier Texas moms and babies. We thank the committee for their attention in this matter and are eager to answer any questions members may have.

Sincerely,

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