



new hampshire
WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

February 20, 2018

Senator Daniel Innis, Chair
New Hampshire Senate Commerce Committee
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Testimony in Support of SB 421

Dear Chair Innis and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation invests in equality and opportunity for New Hampshire women and girls through grantmaking, research, education, and advocacy. We support SB 421 and urge the Committee to recommend "Ought to Pass" on the bill.

SB 421 would update New Hampshire's existing contraceptive equity law, which has been on the books since 1999, to guarantee New Hampshire women can access prescription birth control without cost-sharing and with 12-month supplies if prescribed by their healthcare providers. These are common-sense measures that will make sure that obstacles like cost, transportation, and geography don't get in the way of essential preventive healthcare for women.

Women use prescription birth control to prevent pregnancy and to manage conditions such as endometriosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome, and fibroids. More than half of women who use birth control pills rely on them at least in part for something other than pregnancy prevention. SB 421 will reduce unintended pregnancy and help ensure that women who use prescription birth control for non-contraceptive purposes stay healthy.

Modern prescription birth control, and the family planning it makes possible, was one of the greatest public health achievements of the 20th century. In addition to promoting maternal and child health, prescription birth control has been transformational for women's educational opportunities and economic success. Access to prescription birth control promotes attainment of higher education. The number of women who finish college today is a staggering six times what it was before the legalization of birth control. Today women earn half of all doctoral, medical, and law degrees. Access to prescription birth control is also a major driver of women's increased earnings, having helped shrink the "wage gap" between working men and women. Today women are the primary breadwinners in more than 40 percent of American households with children.

When women are healthy and prosperous, their families succeed and our communities grow stronger. Prescription birth control is essential preventive healthcare that allows women to plan

their families and their lives. SB 421 will bring New Hampshire's contraceptive equity law into the 21st century and reduce the barriers that can limit access.

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation is pleased to be a resource to the Committee if members have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your consideration of SB 421.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "SM Dustin".

Sarah Mattson Dustin
Director of Policy