



Legislation Text

File #: 0044X-2009, **Version:** 1

In recognition of the Fourth Annual Prevention First Lobby Day.

Whereas, Ohio has the 28th highest teen pregnancy rate in America, with nearly 29,000 girls age 10-19 getting pregnant each year and;

Whereas, in 2007, the last year complete data is available, 45,771 cases of Chlamydia, 19,975 cases of Gonorrhea, and 552 cases of Syphilis were diagnosed and 6,890 people were living with HIV/AIDS in Ohio and;

Whereas, according to Community Research Partners high school girls living in Franklin County are 38% more likely to get pregnant and 32% more likely to have an abortion than peers elsewhere in Ohio and;

Whereas, The Ohio Prevention First Act was first introduced as House Bill 588 on May 11, 2006 and Senate Bill 328 on May 12, 2006; despite strong public calls for action, no hearings were ever scheduled and;

Whereas, On May 30, 2007, with bi-partisan support, the Ohio Prevention First Act (House Bill 251 and Senate Bill 179) was re-introduced in the Ohio General Assembly and;

Whereas, The Ohio Prevention First Act would:

- require insurance plans that cover prescriptions to also cover birth control;
- require pharmacies to fill all in-stock legal prescriptions and to dispense all over-the-counter medications;
- ensure access to emergency contraception in all emergency rooms for sexual assault victims;
- ensure that Ohio's state funded sexual education programs provide young people with the information they need to make safe, informed, responsible choices; and
- launch a teen pregnancy prevention state task force to research best practices and programs proven to be effective in reducing teenage pregnancy rates and;

Whereas, since The Ohio Prevention First Act was introduced, Ohioans have participated in three "lobby days", hundreds of personal meetings with legislators, and forwarded over 12,000 phone calls, petition signatures, and letters to members of the Ohio General Assembly requesting a hearing and support on The Ohio Prevention First Act, and

Whereas, The previous Senate version of the Ohio Prevention First Act (SB 179) received its first hearing in the Senate Health, Human Services, and Aging Committee on June 27, 2007 where Sen. Sue Morano provided sponsor testimony on the bill and answered questions from her colleagues on the committee, but has yet to receive any public comment hearings, and;

Whereas, The previous House version of the Ohio Prevention First Act (HB 251) received its first hearing in the House Health Committee on November 19, 2008 where Rep. Tyrone Yates and Rep. Jon Peterson provided sponsor testimony on the bill and answered questions from their colleagues on the committee, but has yet to receive any public comment hearings, and;

Whereas, advocates of The Ohio Prevention First Act, including The Coalition for Family Health, Naral, Pro-Choice Ohio, Planned Parenthood Affiliates of Ohio, The National Council of Jewish Women, and former sponsors and co-sponsors in the legislature are working to reintroduce the bill in the 128th General Assembly, and;

Whereas, further public discussion and education is needed to combat the staggering number of sexually transmitted infections,

diseases, and unplanned pregnancies in our state; now, therefore

Now therefore be it resolved that the Council of The City of Columbus does hereby respectfully request that the Ohio House of Representatives 128th General Assembly and the House Health committee, to schedule a hearing on The Ohio Prevention First Act in coordination with the fourth annual Prevention First Lobby Day on April 22, 2009.