

The ACCESS Act

Advancing Contraception Coverage and Economic Security in our State
Sen. Chandler | Reps. Pat Haddad & John Scibak

**Because everyone should have access
to the birth control that's right for them**

Patients should be able to access preventive care they need

Contraception is basic, preventive health care that everyone should be able to access, regardless of economic status. The vast majority of women, 99%, use birth control at some point in their lives. Yet prohibitively expensive co-pays and out-of-pocket expenses can make it impossible to protect one's health and plan a family, especially for the most vulnerable in our communities.

The Trump administration has undermined Affordable Care Act protections

The Affordable Care Act guarantees patients access to preventive health care, including birth control, without co-pays. The elimination of out-of-pocket costs has allowed over 55 million people in the United States, including 1.4 million in Massachusetts, to afford the birth control option that works best for them — regardless of their economic status. In October, Trump issued new regulations that directly threaten access to birth control. They will allow employers to discriminate in health care by refusing to cover contraception for their employees simply by claiming personal religious or even “moral” objections.

Massachusetts must safeguard coverage

The ACCESS Act will safeguard the 1.4 million Massachusetts residents who currently have access to no-copay birth control, and expand coverage. It will ensure that people in Massachusetts will be able to continue to get contraception without paying co-pays out of pocket; prevent insurers from interfering with people's medical decisions by requiring them to try and “fail” multiple methods of birth control (which could include pregnancy or medical complications) before authorizing coverage for a potentially more effective form of birth control, such as an IUD; enable doctors to prescribe 12 months of birth control for a patient at a time, which is proven to increase consistent use and reduce unwanted pregnancies; and create a mechanism for patients to obtain emergency contraception at their local pharmacy without paying out of pocket. The legislation maintains existing exemptions for religious institutions.

Stand up for reproductive health and lead the nation

No one should be denied birth control because of their employer's personal beliefs, or be forced to pay out-of-pocket to receive the care that's right for them. Decisions regarding birth control methods are best left to doctors and their patients – not their employers. By passing the ACCESS Act, Massachusetts will continue to lead the nation in reducing unintended pregnancies and improving health care access.