



4201 N 27th St, 7th Floor N
Milwaukee, WI 53216
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AB 176 Public Hearing Testimony

Chairman Moses & Committee Members:

I'm Jamie Lynn Crofts, the Policy Director for Wisconsin Voices. We are a nonpartisan nonprofit that partners with more than 60 other nonprofit and grassroots organizations around the state.

I am here today to ask you to vote yes on AB 176.

The fact of the matter is this: when women control their reproductive destinies, they control their lives.

Family planning gives women the ability to make the most intimate and personal decisions about their families, their bodies, and their lives. Access to birth control is one of the biggest drivers of women's increased ability to finish school, get a higher education, enter the workforce, and earn higher wages. A University of Michigan study found that fully one-third of the wage gains women have made since 1960 are directly attributable to oral contraceptives.¹

These are just some of the reasons why the CDC named family planning, including access to modern birth control, one of the 10 greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.²

Barriers to access are one of the biggest reasons for inconsistent use of contraception.

It can be incredibly difficult for women who are trapped in abusive relationships, are already single mothers, work multiple jobs or low-wage jobs, lack reliable transportation, or live in under-served or rural communities, to access doctor's appointments.

¹ Martha J. Bailey, et al, The Opt-In Revolution? Contraception and the Gender Gap in Wages, Nat'l Bureau of Economic Research, available at <https://news.umich.edu/u-m-study-parsing-the-pills-impact-on-womens-wages/>.

² *Achievements in Public Health, 1900-1999: Family Planning*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 48(47), 1073-1080 (1999), available at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm4847a1.htm>.



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For women who are experiencing domestic violence, easier access to birth control can be life-saving.

A woman who is trapped in an abusive situation may find it impossible to get to a doctor's appointment without facing the wrath of her abuser. But she may be able to get to the pharmacy.

By reducing logistical burdens, pharmacist prescription of contraceptives increases access to birth control in a real and important way.

As you've heard, 27 states and Washington, DC already allow pharmacists to prescribe birth control — and these programs work.³

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists supports both over-the-counter and pharmacist prescription of contraceptives — has found it to be both safe and effective.⁴

And a study conducted 2 years after Oregon began pharmacist prescription of contraceptives found that the program increased women's quality of life, averted at least 51 unintended pregnancies, and saved \$1.6 million.⁵

To address some concerns raised earlier in the hearing, all 50 states, including Wisconsin, allow over the counter or behind the counter access to naloxone to reverse opioid overdose.⁶

And in 43 states, pharmacists can already prescribe medication for things such as the flu, respiratory infections, strep throat, skin conditions, tobacco-cessation

³ Pharmacist Prescribing of Hormonal Birth Control, Power to Decide, <https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/resource-library/pharmacist-prescribing-hormonal-birth-control>.

⁴ American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, *Over-the-Counter Access to Hormonal Contraception*, Committee Opinion No. 788 (2019) (*aff'd* 2021), available at <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2019/10/over-the-counter-access-to-hormonal-contraception>.

⁵ Maria Rodriguez *et al*, *Association of Pharmacist Prescription of Hormonal Contraception with Unintended Pregnancies and Medicaid Costs*, *Obstetrics and Gynecology* 133 (6) (2019): 1238–1246.

⁶ Legislative Analysis & Public Policy Association, *Naloxone: Summary of State Laws* (Jan. 2023), available at <http://legislativeanalysis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Naloxone-Access-Summary-of-State-Laws.pdf>.



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therapy, HIV pre-and post-exposure prophylaxis, hemorrhoids, mouth ulcers, and allergic conjunctivitis, among others.⁷

Increasing access to birth control is good for public health and good for the economy.

It is in everyone's best interest to prevent unintended pregnancies, and that's exactly what AB 176 would do.

Please, vote yes on AB 176.

Thank you.

⁷ Michael Chamberlain, *Can Your Pharmacist Prescribe? Here's What They Can and Can't Do*, Prescription Hope (updated 2023), available at <https://prescriptionhope.com/can-your-pharmacist-prescribe-heres-what-they-can-and-cant-do/>.