HB 2642 Portal comments

As a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that works towards teen pregnancy prevention and adolescent health, Healthy Futures of Texas strongly supports HB 2642, which would support the health of young adults in Texas by making them aware of preventive care programs for which they may already be eligible.

In 2020 there were 15,490 births to teens aged 18 - 19 in Texas, 88% of which occurred outside of marriage. Additionally, among young women aged 20-24 years olds in Texas, 67% of births were non-marital in 2020, indicating that they likely were unintentional.

Many young women of college age want to be using effective contraception to prevent unintended pregnancy, but perceive cost or lack of insurance coverage as an insurmountable barrier. Among Texas youth aged 19-24, 29% are uninsured. They may also be deferring care such as well women checks or cervical cancer screenings. In addition to supporting health, providing these preventive health care services saves the state money by averting unintended pregnancy and preventing cervical cancer.

These young women are unaware that programs such as Healthy Texas Women or the Family Planning Program are available to cover these services. Additionally, in our work with community college campuses, we have seen that many youth serving professionals such as college wellness counselors also are not aware of these programs and are not able to refer students to them.

We respectfully urge committee members to support HB 2642.