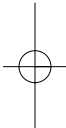
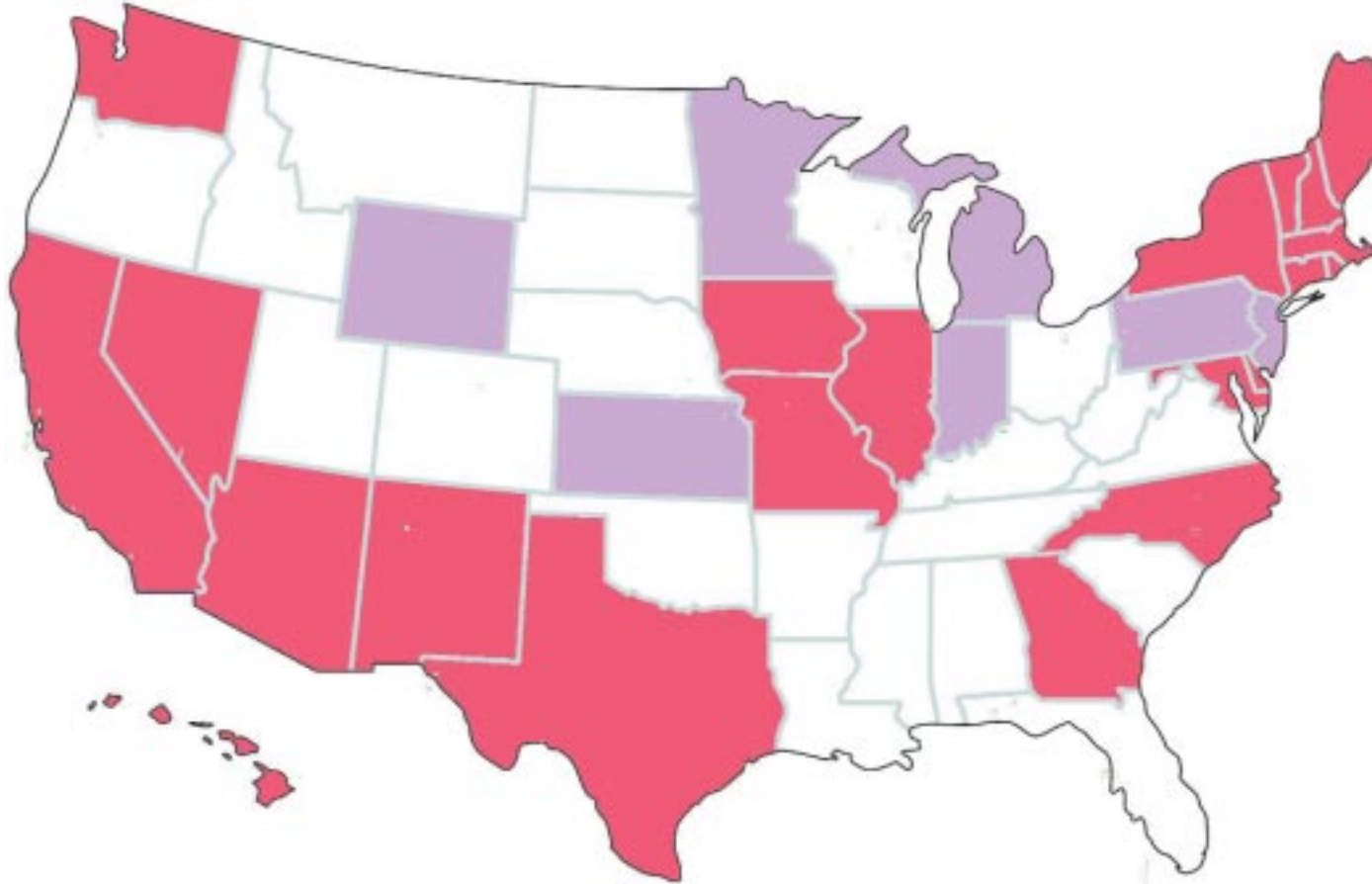


Illinois Becomes the 21st State to Pass a Contraceptive Equity Law!

Population Connection's Email Action Network Sees Results of Campaign



Key to Map:



States with a contraceptive equity law



States where a contraceptive equity law was introduced, but legislation is currently stalled, postponed, or hasn't left committee

This summer, after a barrage of email, faxes and letters from Population Connection's Email Action Network members living in Illinois, the state became the 21st to pass a contraceptive equity law. The law requires all insurance providers that cover prescription drugs to also cover all FDA-approved contraceptive drugs and devices. This is a huge step forward for gender equity in insurance coverage (no longer can insurers cover Viagra but not birth-control pills) and a move applauded by population activists across the country.

Recent studies show that most insurance plans cover maternity care, abortion and sterilization. Yet only 15 percent of health plans cover all five FDA-approved prescription contraceptive methods and only 50 percent cover any method at all. This exclusion greatly contributes to health care costs for

women of reproductive age: nationally, women pay 68 percent more in out-of-pocket health care expenses than men.

The cost to insurers of providing contraceptive coverage is minimal. For health plans that currently do not cover any method, it would cost employers \$21.40 per employee per year to cover the full range of FDA-approved reversible contraceptive methods. Assuming that employers pay 80 percent of these costs, the added cost for employers amounts to just \$1.43 per month, a premium increase of only 0.6 percent. The cost would be less for plans that already cover one or more methods.

Contraceptives are the first line of defense in enhancing the health of women and children, preventing unintended pregnancies, reducing the need for abortion and maintaining low fertility rates. Thanks to all of our members in Illinois who showed their support for this bill.

Do you live in a state without a contraceptive equity law? Or a state where a contraceptive equity bill is hopelessly stalled? Contact your state representatives and tell them you support contraceptive equity.

For more information, visit our Email Action Network: <http://actionnetwork.org/populationconnection>