

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge you to support the Allowing Greater Access to Safe and Effective Contraception Act (S. 930), sponsored by Sens. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and Cory Gardner (R-Colo.). While FDA action remains necessary, this bill marks an important first step toward reducing the government barriers that make it difficult for women to access contraception by paving the way for contraceptives to be sold over the counter (OTC) without a prescription.

Oral contraceptives are safe, effective and widely used by millions of American women. However, the current system for accessing them, which requires a prescription from a doctor in almost all U.S. states, is needlessly burdensome. Adult women can determine for themselves which form of contraception is best for them, and they should be able to access it directly from a pharmacy, not forced to undergo time-consuming and often invasive doctors' visits. Leading medical groups including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Family Physicians have all agreed that contraceptives are appropriate for over-the-counter administration. However, even though the medical community is in agreement, it may be years before over-the-counter status becomes a reality due to the expensive and slow-moving nature of the FDA approval process.

The Allowing Greater Access to Safe and Effective Contraception Act will fast-track this process by incentivizing manufacturers of routine-use contraceptives to file FDA applications for OTC status. These incentives apply to any contraceptive the FDA deems to be safe and effective for routine OTC use by adults over the age of 18. The bill also makes it easier for women to save for their contraceptive needs by allowing them to use health, medical and flexible savings accounts to purchase over-the-counter drugs without a prescription.

Birth control can be safely administered over the counter, and it is time for the FDA's regulatory regime to catch up with medical reality. National conversations surrounding contraceptives tend to be bitterly politicized, but making them available over the counter is a commonsense, market-friendly solution to enhance women's reproductive freedom without burdening taxpayers. Passing the Allowing Greater Access to Safe and Effective Contraception Act would be a crucial step in the right direction toward more sensible regulation.

Sincerely,

R Street Institute

Independent Women's Forum

Independent Women's Voice

Taxpayers Protection Alliance