

June 26, 2017

Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our appreciation for the improvements to sex education policy you proposed in your FY 2018 budget:

- Continuation of the *Sexual Risk Avoidance (SRA) Education* program.
- Reauthorization of the *Title V Abstinence Education* program.
- Elimination of the *Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP)* program.

For the past eight years, the previous administration promised communities, educators, and parents that if they implemented the *Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP)* program, youth would be helped. But government HHS research indicates that the opposite is true. More than 80% of students in the TPP program fared either worse or no better than those not in the program. These results are not surprising given that many of these programs send children as young as 11 years old to websites that tell them how to have sex and encourages sexual exploration. It is unacceptable that this dangerous promotion of risky sexual behavior is being taught rather than teaching youth how to avoid risky behavior. After spending nearly a billion dollars on this failed approach that normalizes teen sexual activity, we agree that youth deserve better and taxpayer dollars should no longer go to this program. We are encouraged that your budget request asks for the elimination of this program.

In addition to your budget improvements, we also encourage your administration, through the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), under Secretary Tom Price's capable leadership, to place a renewed emphasis on optimal health for youth. We believe this can be accomplished in the following ways:

- Eliminate the Office of Adolescent Health (OAH), an unnecessary and duplicative office that aggressively pushes an agenda that puts too many teens at great risk.
- Abolish the *Teen Pregnancy Prevention* "evidence-based" list for sex education because the list continues to be used to promote an ideological agenda that harms youth. Research protocols were ignored, making the "proven effective" promise hollow, as evidenced by the astonishingly poor results in research, cited earlier in this letter.
- Move the current focused priority away from minimalistic "teen pregnancy prevention" to avoiding all the risks of sex through "sexual risk avoidance (SRA)."

- Ensure that staff with SRA program oversight work to help grantees succeed in their efforts to help youth achieve optimal health, rather than compromising grantees' effectiveness through nefarious ideological prejudices.
- Guarantee that SRA grantees are following the legislative guidelines for funding.
- Ensure that Personal Responsibility Education program (PREP) and currently-funded TPP grantees place a meaningful emphasis on the skills and information to help youth avoid sex or regain a risk-free lifestyle if they are currently sexually active.
- Implement an SRA component in every youth-serving program currently under the jurisdiction of HHS, with the hope that this effort will be supported and implemented inter-departmentally within all appropriate federal agencies.

Countering nearly everything one would expect from the media, most of today's teens are not sexually active. In fact, far fewer teens have had sex today than at any time in the last 25 years. The SRA message is resonating with teens and is more relevant today than it was decades before. HHS has a unique opportunity to reinforce these healthy decisions. We are optimistic that you will boldly promote the best health outcomes for youth.

SRA programs work. More youth are waiting to have sex and they are escaping poverty as a result. SRA educators empower students to avoid sex, and focus on their education, so that they can increase their chances of being self-sufficient, successful adults who build healthy families in the future. Studies also show youth who do not engage in sexual activity have better health outcomes on a host of other behaviors such as tobacco use, drug and alcohol use, dietary habits and other behaviors that are often harmful to their health.

Thank you for taking the first step toward giving more youth these opportunities as outlined in your FY 2018 budget proposal. We enthusiastically support an aggressive implementation of "step two" within HHS, so that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and more youth are helped, rather than harmed.

Respectfully,

American College of Pediatricians
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American Values
Gary Bauer - President

American Principles Project
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Ascend
Mary Anne Mosack - Executive Director

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Concerned Women for America LAC
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Family Policy Alliance
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Family Watch International
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Family Research Council
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New Yorker's Family Research
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Parent's Right in Education
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Cc: The Honorable Tom Price, MD
Secretary
The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services