



February 9, 2021

Representative Mike Freiberg, Chair
House Preventative Health Policy Committee
575 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Freiberg:

We're writing to inform you the Minnesota AFL-CIO supports the Protect Access to Contraception Act, HF 520 (Morrison). HF 520 requires that state-regulated health plans cover all FDA-approved contraceptives, counseling and follow-up services at **no out-of-pocket cost, ensuring access to healthcare.**

In 2012, the Executive Council of the National AFL-CIO issued the following statement:

Women have fought hard for the right to safe, legal reproductive health services and the freedom to exercise that right. In support of those rights, the AFL-CIO passed a resolution at its 25th Biennial Convention that promotes the inclusion of contraceptive equity in national health plans and in collective bargaining agreements.

With women now making up more than half of America's workforce, it is crucial that we, as the labor movement, continue to defend the rights of all women and all employees against any effort to allow employers to dictate the quality of women's health care. The fact is that providing contraceptive coverage at no cost can also benefit employers. Research by the National Business Group on Health estimated it would cost employers up to 17 percent more not to provide contraceptive coverage than to provide it. Women, who pay between \$30 and \$50 a month, could save up to \$600 a year.

With the unprecedented attacks on workers' rights, women have been disproportionately affected. However, the attacks have now gone beyond the consideration of legislative and policy debates. The denial of contraceptive coverage is seen as discrimination against women and an attack on workers' right to basic health coverage. The right to quality health care has deteriorated into an attack on the character of women who want nothing more than to have a personal decision in the matter. Contraception is not only important in helping women and men plan their families, it is also used to treat or prevent many health conditions that affect women, including reducing their risk of developing ovarian and endometrial cancers.

As the AFL-CIO, we commit to ensuring that women have the right to quality health care, including equal access to contraception, and have the ability to exercise that right regardless of where they work.

The Minnesota AFL-CIO affirms and upholds those remarks and supports the passage of HF 520. We respectfully ask for your YES vote to move this legislation forward.

Thank you for your time and please contact us should you have questions.

Sincerely,

William McCarthy
President

Bradley Lehto
Secretary-Treasurer