

To: House Committee on Health Care
From: Ceci Patten
Date: April 14, 2015
Re: Testimony in Support of HB 3343

Chair Greenlick and the committee:

My name is Ceci Patten and I am here as a young woman who takes birth control in support of HB 3343. I began taking birth control a year ago to ease pain associated with my menstrual cycle and I anticipate that I will be taking contraceptives for the better part of the next 30 years.

I am a junior in high school and I already know that the world expects a lot out of my generation. I am a good student and value my education. I study hard so that I can graduate high school and get into a good college. I participate in varsity lacrosse and have practice every night, often until 10pm. Just this week I was named Captain of my team, which is an honor since I'm not a senior. On the weekends and days after school when I don't have practice I work at my part time job.

I set my alarm every morning for 4am to get up and take my birth control because it is supposed to be taken at a consistent time and my schedule is so hectic that is the only time I know for sure I'll always be in the same place at the same time. I have to get my refills every 90 days. I am able to have the refill mailed to me, but even remembering to order it in enough time to make sure I don't miss a day is sometimes a challenge. If I do miss a day, my menstrual cycle causes me a lot of pain, which negatively impacts my education. Something as important and effective as birth control should just a little bit easier to get.

Many of my friends who take birth control don't have the same options. One young woman I know has to refill her birth control every 30 days. If she wants to get an additional 60 days she has to pay out of pocket. There is not a mail delivery option so her mother has to go to the pharmacy and pick up the birth control monthly. And it isn't available at consistent times. Sometimes the pharmacy calls her a week in advance but sometimes they call just the day before she needs the new prescription. When that happens, her mom has to make time during her work day to go pick it up so she can start it the very next day.

My friends and I are just a small sampling of the 99% of women that will take birth control at some point in their lives. For birth control to be effective, consistency is essential. For many women, whether they are working multiple jobs or living in remote rural areas of the state, receiving only 30 or 90 days of contraception at a time can be an obstacle to effective use. A 30- or 90-day supply also does not adequately serve the needs of women without access to transportation and doesn't even serve many college students and others who don't reside in one place.

For something that almost every single woman will be on at some point in her life dispensing a 12 month supply of birth control just makes sense.