

## SUPPORT THE YOUTH ACCESS TO SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT OF 2017

Senator Mazie K. Hirono (D-HI) and Congresswoman Alma Adams (D-NC-12) are once again leading introduction of the *Youth Access to Sexual Health Services Act* (YASHS Act), legislation first introduced in 2016 that would provide grants to increase and improve the linkage and access of marginalized young people to sexual and reproductive health care and related services.

### Youth Face Barriers Accessing Sexual Health Services

To ensure lifelong sexual health, all young people need information about, and access to, affordable, youth-friendly, and linguistically and culturally competent health care, as well as providers who respect patient privacy and support them in making their own choices. Unfortunately, far too many young people in the United States face barriers—including stigma and discrimination, lack of knowledgeable providers, cost, transportation, and perceived lack of confidentiality—that prevent them from accessing recommended and necessary sexual health services. These barriers contribute to health challenges and disparities, as evidenced by the continued high rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and unintended pregnancy among young people.

### The YASHS Act would enable our nation's most vulnerable youth to bridge these barriers by providing communities with resources to support partnerships and programs that:

- Equip young people with medically-accurate and complete, age-appropriate information and skills on how to access and obtain sexual health care and related services;
- Promote effective communication regarding sexual health;
- Promote and support better health, educational, and economic opportunities for young parents and families; and/or
- Train those working with young people to promote their sexual health and well-being.

#### The YASHS Act Seeks to Support ...

- ✓ Young people of color;
- ✓ Immigrant youth;
- ✓ LGBTQIA youth;
- ✓ Youth in foster care;
- ✓ Homeless youth;
- ✓ Youth in juvenile detention; and
- ✓ Otherwise marginalized or vulnerable young people

*...access to sexual health care and related services.*

### The YASHS Act would ensure that NO federal funds go to programs that:

Withhold health promoting or life-saving information about sexuality-related topics; are inaccurate or ineffective, promote gender stereotypes; are insensitive and unresponsive to the needs of LGBTQ youth, sexually active youth, youth of varying abilities, school-age parents, survivors of sexual assault and abuse; or are otherwise inconsistent with the ethical imperatives of medicine and public health.

### Endorsing Organizations

ACRIA • Advocates for Youth • AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families • The AIDS Institute • AIDS United • American Association of University Women (AAUW) • American Psychological Association • American Sexual Health Association • Black Women's Health Imperative • Girls Inc • Guttmacher Institute • HealthHIV • Healthy Teen Network • Human Rights Campaign • interACT • Institute for Science and Human Values • JWJ • NARAL Pro-Choice America • National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) • National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) • NASTAD • National Black Justice Coalition • National Black Leadership Commission On AIDS, Inc. • National Center for Lesbian Rights • National Center for Transgender Equality • National Coalition for LGBT Health • National Council of Jewish Women • National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association • National Health Law Program • National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health • National LGBTQ Task Force • National Network of Abortion Funds • National Organization for Women • NMAC • Physicians for Reproductive Health • PFLAG National • Planned Parenthood Federation of America • Secular Coalition for America • Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS) • SisterSong • The Trevor Project • Transgender Law Center • Union for Reform Judaism • Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation • URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity