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June 7, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. ET

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## **Senators propose expanding affordability for over-the-counter oral contraception**

*New poll shows overwhelming bipartisan support among voters for FDA to allow access to the pill without a prescription*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In anticipation of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approving over-the-counter status for oral contraceptives, new proposed federal [legislation](#) urges the FDA to approve OTC applications that meet its safety standards “without delay” and would expand insurance coverage to non-prescription oral contraceptives.

Under the [Affordability is Access Act](#), introduced today by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Ayanna Pressley (MA-07), if “and when the Food and Drug Administration approves an oral birth control that is available over-the-counter, such birth control should be covered by health insurance, without a prescription and without cost-sharing.”

June 7, 2022 is the anniversary of the 1965 landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which gave married couples the right to use contraception.

The Affordability is Access Act introduction comes at the same time that [a new poll shows](#) voters **enthusiastically support over-the-counter access to birth control pills by a +48-point margin** (71 percent support, 23 percent oppose). Notably, the **research also showed support among voters across parties: Democrats by a +60-point margin, Independents by a +44-point margin, and Republicans by a +32-point margin.**

The national survey, conducted in the days following the leak of a draft Supreme Court opinion that would allow states to ban abortion, also finds that **a majority of voters across parties would “vote for a candidate who supports expanding access to birth control in general.”**

The survey was conducted on behalf of the [Contraceptive Access Initiative](#), a nonprofit focused on ensuring an FDA review and approval process for over-the-counter access to the birth control pill based on facts and evidence.

Since 2016, the FDA has been working with two companies that are seeking to eliminate the prescription requirement for two popular formulations of the birth control pill. (See June 6 STAT First Opinion: [“‘Pink tape’ at the FDA is delaying access to contraception — again.”](#))

Major medical associations — including the [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#) — have endorsed over-the-counter access to the pill for all ages.

“Policymakers, voters and medical experts support eliminating needless barriers to oral contraception, including cost barriers,” CAI Co-founder Dana Singiser said. “More than six decades of safety data about the pill and a national reproductive health crisis should motivate the FDA to prioritize moving the review process toward approval.”

Calls for the FDA to act with urgency are escalating. In March, 50 members of Congress urged FDA to take action, [writing](#) “The health and well-being of people capable of pregnancy across America is at stake.”

“Affordable contraception is an urgent equity issue and this legislation expands important options for people seeking to prevent pregnancy,” said Dr. Raegan McDonald-Mosley, chief executive officer of Power to Decide, chief medical advisor for Contraceptive Access Initiative and a practicing OB-GYN. “Affordable, safe over-the-counter oral contraception will benefit people in rural areas, people without health insurance coverage, people who do not have a regular health care provider or cannot afford to take time off from work to see one, as well as people with low incomes.”

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*The nonprofit [Contraceptive Access Initiative](#) (CAI) advocates for increasing access to hormonal contraception over the counter, free from stigma, bias and coercion.*