



Memo

## Healthy Teens Act Introduced

New York's young people have something to organize about this year! Assemblymember Richard Gottfried (D-Manhattan) and Senator Nicholas Spano (R-Westchester) are introducing the Healthy Teens Act in the State Legislature.

While students across the state are getting involved in FPA's Get the Facts NY campaign, it's going to take the energy and ambition of many partners to ensure that young people have access to the information and services they need to stay healthy.

The Healthy Teens Act will create a competitive grant program to fund age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education in New York State. Under the plan, school districts, BOCES, school-based health centers and community-based organizations can apply for grants to develop and implement programs that provide young people with real sex education.

It's all about helping young people make healthy decisions. FPA has worked hard to make sure the urgent message is received in Albany: parents, schools and communities need help teaching young people about abstinence, contraception and communication skills.

Elected officials are getting the message: 46 Members of the Assembly – both Democrats and Republicans – have signed on to support the bill. With so much bi-partisan support, it's no wonder this legislation is causing a buzz at the Capitol.

## FPA Launches Global Partnership to Exchange Advocacy Expertise



Planned Parenthood Global Partners® (PPGP) selected Family Planning Advocates and the International Planned Parenthood Federation-European Network (IPPF-EN) to conduct the first international partnership focused exclusively on advocacy.

FPA has begun work on the PPGP project that will include two partnership exchange trips and a New York State campaign to raise awareness of international reproductive health and rights issues. IPPF-EN will send a delegation to New York in May to learn about FPA's use of advocacy tools. A delegation representing FPA is scheduled to visit Europe in September to work on rights-based approaches to advocacy on sex education and reproductive health services for youth.

FPA's first international initiative was launched at the Annual Conference in January with a Global Reproductive Health Challenges caucus meeting. Participants received a copy of *Understanding Religious and Political Opposition to Reproductive Health and Rights: A Resource Guide*. An electronic version of the guide is available by e-mailing a request to [info@edfundfpa.org](mailto:info@edfundfpa.org).

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### Meet FPA's New Board Chair Catherine Abate

Catherine Abate is a long-time advocate for reproductive rights who is well-known for her public service in New York. This year, she adds to her many credits the title of chair of the board of Family Planning Advocates of New York State.

Abate, who served as a State Senator from 1994-1998, began her career as an attorney at Legal Aid Society. She held the positions of executive deputy commissioner of the New York State Division of Human Rights, chair of the state Crime Victims Board, and commissioner of both the New York City Departments of Correction and Probation. Since 1999, she has served as president and CEO of Community Healthcare Network in New York City.





## President's Column

More than 1000 advocates and 150 elected officials and legislative staff braved the snow to show support for family planning at FPA's 2005 Annual Conference.

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton presented a keynote address that created international headlines concerning the issues of choice and propelled our agenda to the forefront of the national debate.

The overwhelming success of FPA's Annual Conference demonstrates progress toward our collective goal of maintaining the momentum created last year at the March for Women's Lives.

We are energized for the battles ahead: to preserve Medicaid, to defend access to abortion and to provide real sex education, to name a few.

I am heartened to know that FPA can count on your active support.

JoAnn M. Smith  
President and CEO

### Make sure your voice is heard by continuing your membership with FPA.

An envelope is enclosed in this newsletter to make it easy. When you contribute \$50 or more, you'll continue to receive our newsletter plus timely legislative updates. Make sure you include your e-mail address for the fastest way to get information! For more information about membership benefits and ways to give, call FPA at (518)436-8408.

## FPA Conference Makes National News

FPA's 28th Annual Conference on January 24, 2005, was marked by a significant increase in attendance and overwhelming attention from the media. The Empire State Plaza Convention Center was filled to capacity for Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton's address at the Annual Conference Luncheon. The speech was covered in hundreds of media stories that appeared all over the world. The Senator's "common ground" message continues to be a topic of discussion in political circles around the globe.



## FDA Delays Decision on EC OTC – Again

The FDA again failed to make emergency contraception (EC) available over-the-counter (OTC). On January 21, the FDA informed Barr Laboratories, the manufacturer of Plan B, that it would delay its decision on Barr's application to change the status of Plan B from prescription only to over-the-counter for women aged 16 and older. Barr originally petitioned the FDA to make Plan B available over-the-counter for all women – and the FDA's own advisory committees voted 24 to 3 that the petition be approved. But the FDA first delayed, then denied Barr's application.

Dr. Lester Crawford, who served as acting commissioner of the FDA through much of the agency's EC decision-making process, has been nominated by President Bush to serve as FDA commissioner. Senate Democrats grilled Dr. Crawford about the FDA's refusal to allow over-the-counter sales of Plan B during his confirmation hearings and demanded answers before they vote on his nomination.

# Around New York

## Assembly Passes Emergency Contraception Bill

The New York State Assembly passed legislation allowing women needing emergency contraception (EC) to obtain this safe and effective medication in pharmacies or from registered nurses through collaborative agreements with physicians. FPA is working to secure Senate passage of this important measure. *See photo at right.*

## FPA Testifies at HCRA Hearings

The New York State Health Care Reform Act (HCRA), which authorizes funding to subsidize hospitals and provides health coverage for the uninsured, is up for reauthorization this year. FPA is working to secure HCRA funding for implementation of the Healthy Teens Act, and the provision of enhanced services for youth and immigrant teens. Planned Parenthood of New York City President Joan Malin presented testimony on behalf of FPA at a public hearing on HCRA in New York City and Planned Parenthood Mohawk-Hudson Co-president Paul Drisgula testified at the Albany HCRA hearing.

## Women's Health and Wellness Law Defended in Court

On February 23, New York's Appellate Division heard oral arguments in Catholic Charities' legal appeal to dismantle the Women's Health and Wellness Act. The 2002 law forced insurance companies to cover contraception and other reproductive health care needs in an important step toward ending discrimination against women in health care. A similar law was upheld by California's highest court in 2004 after it was challenged by Catholic Charities of Sacramento; an appeal to that decision was rejected by the US Supreme Court.

## Clergy Day in Albany April 12

Concerned Clergy for Choice will gather in Albany on April 12 to meet with legislators to discuss The Healthy Teens Act, Medicaid reform and other important issues. For more information, please contact FPA's Clergy Project at (518)436-8408 or [info@fpaofnys.org](mailto:info@fpaofnys.org).

## County Fact Sheets Available on Teen Pregnancy and STIs

Get the Facts NY has produced fact sheets that clearly present reproductive health statistics by county. The fact sheets contain information about rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea and teen pregnancy broken down by county and compared to statewide and national rates. Teen pregnancy rates are also reported by zip code, providing key data for local analysis. "County Health Statistics" can be viewed at [www.getthefactsny.org](http://www.getthefactsny.org) by clicking the "policymakers" section. For more information, please call FPA at (518)436-8408.

## New Staff Joins Planned Parenthood

**Lisa Winjum**, Director of Public Affairs and Communications, Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic

## Campus Connection

**Elmira College VOX** chapter sponsored a production of the *Vagina Monologues* on February 11. Proceeds from this successful annual event went to the Rape Crisis Department of the Southern Tier, which is a program of Planned Parenthood Southern Finger Lakes.

**St. Lawrence University** is working closely with Planned Parenthood of Northern New York to start a VOX group on campus.

**University at Albany VOX** students are spreading the word that real sex ed saves lives! VOX students organized safer sex outreach efforts and hosted a Real Life, Real Talk program. The students are working with Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood's Choice Volunteers of Faith to organize a forum featuring FPA Clergy for Choice Director Rabbi Dennis Ross and PPFA Chaplain Ignacio Castuera.



FPA President JoAnn Smith joined Speaker of the House Sheldon Silver to announce Assembly passage of the "Unintended Pregnancy Prevention Act," sponsored by Assemblymember Amy Paulin.

## FPA Albany Memo

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**Get Active!** Make sure you're part of the Planned Parenthood Action Network of New York State. Receive fast, easy and free updates and action alerts by signing up at [www.fpaofnys.org](http://www.fpaofnys.org).

# From the Hill

## Prevention First Act Introduced in US Senate

For the first time ever, a positive, pro-choice bill was introduced in the US Senate as a "leadership bill." These bills signify each parties' priorities and direction for the session. Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) introduced the Prevention First Act (S.20) as one of the Democrats' first ten bills. The Prevention First Act is an omnibus family planning initiative that expands access to preventive health care services and education programs that help reduce unintended pregnancy, prevent sexually transmitted diseases, and reduce the need for abortion. New York Senators Clinton and Schumer are co-sponsors. New York Congress-member Louise Slaughter will introduce companion legislation in the House next month.

## House Approves Maloney UNFPA Funding Amendment

On March 15, the House of Representatives approved an amendment authored by Congressmember Carolyn Maloney of New York to provide funding for UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, for its work in tsunami-affected countries. While this is a welcome victory, it is only the first step toward restoring US funding for UNFPA's humanitarian efforts overseas.

## REAL Sex Education Bill Announced

The "Responsible Education About Life" (REAL) Act was introduced in Congress. The bill is similar to the former Family Life Education Act (FLEA). But REAL calls for comprehensive sex education programs to be funded at the same level as abstinence-only programs – that's more than \$200 million this year.

## Medical Privacy Under Siege

Private medical records were demanded from reproductive health clinics in Kansas and Indiana by governmental units claiming to be investigating "abuse." The rights of patients in both of these very serious cases are in hands of the courts.

## Teen Abandonment Act Endangers Young Women

The Teen Abandonment Act, called the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act (CIANA) by anti-choice extremists, will harm young women who face unintended pregnancies. The bill would make it a federal crime for any person other than a parent to help a young woman travel to another state to obtain an abortion if she has not complied with the forced parental involvement law of her home state. It will also impose a federal parental notification and mandatory delay requirement when a young woman seeks an abortion outside her state of residence.

## Schumer Clinic Violence Amendment Defeated

The US Senate made it easy for violent offenders to escape punishment even after being convicted for their crimes. The Clinic Violence Amendment, authored and introduced by New York Senator Charles Schumer, would have ensured that perpetrators of violence against reproductive health clinics would not be able to file for bankruptcy in order to avoid paying fines and penalties assessed against them in court proceedings. Instead, the Senate voted 46 to 53 to allow these convicted felons to continue manipulating the judicial process in order to avoid paying for their crimes.

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