

**SACRAMENTO, CA**—Yesterday, Governor Brown signed Senate Bill (SB) 1053 into law. SB 1053 — the Contraceptive Coverage Equity Act — requires health insurance coverage of the full range of FDA-approved methods of birth control without restrictions or co-pays starting January 1, 2016. The groundbreaking measure was introduced by Senator Holly J. Mitchell (D-26) of Los Angeles and co-sponsored by the National Health Law Program (NHeLP) and the California Family Health Council (CFHC).

Although the [Women's Health Amendment](#) in the federal health reform law (the Affordable Care Act) required most health insurance carriers to cover the full range of FDA-approved birth control methods without out-of-pocket costs since August of 2012, related federal regulations allowed health plans to apply "reasonable medical management techniques." As a result, women across the nation and state are still being denied the birth control method of their choice and continue to face restrictions that maintain barriers to access like step therapy, prior authorization, and co-payments.

"This legislation ensures that women in California enrolled in private health insurance and Medi-Cal can choose the method of birth control that is most appropriate for her and makes certain that choice is covered by her health plan," said Elizabeth G. Taylor, NHeLP executive director. "SB 1053 is the first of its kind and can serve as a model for states throughout the country. We look forward to working with advocates around the country to make sure all women have the ability to make their own reproductive decisions."

"This is a huge victory for women's health. With Governor Brown's signature, the promise of comprehensive and consistent contraceptive coverage without cost-sharing or restrictions will become a reality for California women," said Julie Rabinovitz, president and CEO of CFHC. "We applaud the Governor for continuing California's leadership in enacting legislation that helps prevent unintended pregnancy and respects a woman's right to reproductive autonomy," Rabinovitz added.

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