



The Birth Control Refusal Battle

After a long battle, the Health and Human Services decision to include contraceptive methods as a women's preventive health service, making it available without co-pays, is a historic victory for women's health and women throughout the country. Despite protests from anti-birth control groups, women and men all over Michigan fought for this decision; they fought to ensure that all women, regardless of employer, will receive this benefit, and they fought to defend this decision and thank President Obama for standing with women and protecting women's health.

In Michigan, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan staff, interns, volunteers, and Students for Choice groups showed support for birth control without co-pays at rallies and Students for Choice events on six different campuses. They gathered petition signatures, made their voices heard through social media and opinion pieces in local papers, and talked about this topic to help educate Michigan communities on the importance and benefits of access to birth control. From the *Detroit Free Press* to college newspapers to online blogs, Michiganders were voicing their support!

On the University of Michigan's campus in Ann Arbor, students organized a large event in a very high traffic area to show how access to birth control may benefit college students. An enormous display of \$600 worth of Ramen noodles—the average amount of money a woman spends on birth control in one year alone—drew attention from

all over campus. Students asked passersby what they could do with the extra \$600 and often heard that many would put it towards tuition, a semester's worth of school books, or paying off debt. After donating the Ramen noodles to a local youth homeless shelter, the Ozone House, students and Planned Parenthood volunteers have continued to show their support for birth control without co-pays for women. ■



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