

# House Concurrent Resolution No. 24

## 96TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES NEWMAN (Sponsor), McCREERY, TAYLOR, KELLY (24), MONTECILLO, NICHOLS, McNEIL, KIRKTON, MORGAN, SIFTON, PIERSON, SPRENG, WEBB, STILL, LAMPE, OXFORD, CARTER, JONES (63), SMITH (71), PACE, McCANN BEATTY, ELLINGTON, WALTON GRAY, TALBOY, RIZZO, KELLY (24), ELLINGER, McDONALD, COLONA AND ATKINS (Co-sponsors).

5409L.011

2       **WHEREAS**, women comprise more than half of the population of the United States of  
3 America and are solely responsible for childbearing; and

4       **WHEREAS**, women who plan their pregnancies are more likely to seek prenatal care,  
5 improving their own health and the health of their children; and

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7       **WHEREAS**, the United States of America ranks 30th in the world in its rate of maternal  
8 mortality and has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality among all developed nations; and

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10       **WHEREAS**, family planning services improve health care outcomes and wellness for  
11 women and families, access to family planning is directly linked to declines in maternal and  
12 infant mortality rates, and women who do not receive prenatal care are 3 to 4 times more likely  
13 to die after a live birth than are women who have received even minimal prenatal care; and

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15       **WHEREAS**, contraception enables women to better prevent unintended pregnancies and  
16 plan for pregnancy when they do want to have a child, and publicly funded contraceptive services  
17 and supplies prevent nearly two million unintended pregnancies each year in the United States;  
18 and

19  
20       **WHEREAS**, nearly half of all unintended pregnancies end in abortion and abortion rates  
21 in the United States of America increase during times when contraception is less accessible to  
22 low-income women; and

23  
24       **WHEREAS**, the United States of America has one of the highest rates of unintended  
25 pregnancy among the world's developed nations, half of all the pregnancies in the United States  
26 are unintended, and half of unintended pregnancies occur in women who are not using  
27 contraceptives; and

28  
29       **WHEREAS**, in addition to the primary purpose of allowing women to plan and prepare  
30 for pregnancy, other health benefits of contraception include reduced risk of endometrial and  
31 ovarian cancers, ectopic pregnancy, iron deficiency anemia related to heavy menstruation,  
32 osteoporosis, ovarian cysts, and pelvic inflammatory disease; and

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34       **WHEREAS**, racial and ethnic health disparities are particularly pronounced in  
35 reproductive health - including disparities in rates of contraception usage, unintended  
36 pregnancies, maternal mortality, and sexually transmitted infections - and these disparities reveal  
37 significant barriers to access to sexual health care (including contraception), medical care, and  
38 medically accurate sexuality education; and

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40       **WHEREAS**, a majority of American voters believe that matters related to women's  
41 reproductive rights, including contraception and abortion, are personal issues that should be  
42 decided by women with their families, health care providers, and/or clergy members:

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44       **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the members of the House of  
45 Representatives of the Ninety-sixth General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the Senate  
46 concurring therein, hereby recognize the week of January 22-28, 2012, as "Reproductive Rights  
47 Awareness Week" in Missouri and encourage our citizens to participate in activities to increase  
48 public awareness, initiate conversation, and support the reproductive rights and justice  
49 nationwide.