

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 1, 2022

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra:

We write to you today to express our concern about the future of State Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) funding in New Hampshire. Without immediate action by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), at-risk adolescents in New Hampshire stand to lose access to comprehensive, evidence-based sex education.

For nearly a decade, New Hampshire has received federal PREP funding for two education programs operating in counties with higher-than-average teen pregnancy rates, and the results have been outstanding. TLC Family Resource Center in Claremont, NH, and Amoskeag Health in Manchester, NH offer classes covering abstinence, the reproductive process, sexually transmitted diseases and contraception. This curriculum is aligned with national, evidence-based standards for youth up to age 21 and targets those living in homeless shelters or foster care. Since starting classes in 2012, TLC Family Resource Center reports the surrounding Sullivan County area has seen its teen birth rate drop from 20.27 per 1,000 teens to 11.86 in 2021. Similarly, the City of Manchester has reported a nearly 50 percent decrease in teen pregnancy rates from 2010-2020.

However, this year the New Hampshire Executive Council, which approves the receipt and expenditure of all federal funds in New Hampshire totaling \$10,000 or more, has repeatedly denied PREP funding for TLC Family Resource Center and Amoskeag Health to continue their sex education classes. This shortsighted decision will deprive the State of \$682,074 over the next three years, stymieing the progress New Hampshire has made in decreasing teen birth rates and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Absent PREP funding, TLC Family Resource Center has already announced the cancellation of fall 2022 classes and will end classes for 75 adolescents over the next two years. Similarly, Amoskeag Health will not be able to serve an expected 975 adolescents over the next three years.

Absent direct funding from HHS, Amoskeag Health and TLC Family Resource Center will be forced to end classes until an accessible federal funding source becomes available or in perpetuity, leaving hundreds of New Hampshire youth without access to critical sex education

and pregnancy prevention programs. We urge you to work with our State and PREP providers to find any means available to directly fund these vital programs as soon as possible.

Thank you for your timely attention to this matter. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress