

WHEREAS, recent EEOC and court decisions have drawn attention to the lack of coverage of contraception in the majority of U.S. health care plans; and

WHEREAS, the most recent court ruling, a U.S. District Court decision issued on June 12, 2001, involved nonunion employees of Bartell Drug Company, where the judge ordered the company to cover contraceptives on the same terms that it covers other drugs and preventive care for employees; and

WHEREAS, in the Bartell case, employees represented by the UFCW did have full coverage through their collective bargaining agreement; and

WHEREAS, more than half of insurance plans don't cover prescription birth control, even when they cover other prescription drugs such as Viagra; and

WHEREAS, covering contraception does not raise health care costs—and, in fact, can help reduce absenteeism and other medical costs related to unintended pregnancies; and

WHEREAS, the added cost to employers for providing contraceptive coverage is \$1.43 per month—less than 1 percent of the average cost of medical coverage; and

WHEREAS, when the federal government added contraceptive benefits for its employees, there was no change in insurance costs; and

WHEREAS, American women on average pay \$573 out of pocket for health care, much of it on contraception—which is 68 percent more than men pay; and

WHEREAS, at a time when women represent a growing percentage of union members, this is an issue that can both enhance membership benefits for current members and attract potential members; therefore be it:

RESOLVED that the AFL-CIO urge its affiliates to communicate with their members about contraceptive equity; and be it further

RESOLVED that the AFL-CIO urge affiliates to work quickly and vigorously to secure full contraceptive coverage under union-negotiated health care plans for union members and their dependents, and that such plans:

- Cover all FDA-approved prescription methods, including oral contraceptives; injections; implants; intrauterine devices; barrier methods; and emergency contraception;
- Cover annual office visits with an obstetrician or gynecologist for preventive tests, counseling on contraception, and other gynecological issues;
- Require the same co-payments or deductibles that apply to other medical services;
- Protect patient confidentiality; and be it further

RESOLVED that the AFL-CIO work with state and local governments to ensure that state, county, and local governments include contraceptive coverage in their health care plans: and be it finally

RESOLVED that the AFL-CIO work with appropriate entities toward enactment of a national law that codifies the EEOC and District Court rulings, making coverage for contraceptives available under health care plans on the same terms that the plans cover other drugs, devices, and preventive care for employees.