



Testimony of Lauren Bramwell
SUPPORT: SB 1098 12- Months of Birth Control
Before the Senate Commerce and Human Resources Committee
February 23, 2021

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Idaho stands before you in support of SB 1098, which requires Idaho health benefit plans to provide twelve months of hormonal birth control pills at a time, dispensed on-site at the provider's office if available. Meaningful access to contraception offers individuals the tools to decide whether and when to become a parent, which is critical to equal participation in society. SB 1098 ensures access to a twelve-month supply of birth control all at once, which is vital in ensuring Idahoans are able to continue birth control use without interruption.

Idahoans deserve affordable and accessible birth control that works for them, regardless of income or insurance carrier. Today, most Idahoans have to refill their birth control every month, which can pose as a barrier to consistent medication adherence. With perfect use, hormonal birth control has a failure rate of less than 1%.¹ However, when an individual misses one or more daily pills per cycle, the pregnancy rate can become much higher.² In a study by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, people who received multi-month supplies of birth control were associated with a 30% reduction in the odds of conceiving an unplanned pregnancy compared with dispensing just one or three packs.³ SB 1098 will help ensure birth control is used properly and is continually effective.

Whether to help avoid an unwanted pregnancy or to reduce menstrual cramps, control acne, regulate periods, or control endometriosis,⁴ access to oral contraceptives is crucial. SB 1098 is especially important for rural Idahoans, who often must travel considerable distances to a pharmacy to access birth control on a monthly basis. For people who lack access to transportation, travel for work, attend school away from home, move frequently, or struggle to balance work and family, a twelve-month supply of birth control can make the difference in consistent and effective use.

For these reasons, we strongly urge the committee to vote "yes" on SB 1098.

¹ Options for Sexual Health, "Relative Effectiveness of Birth Control Methods." Updated 2009, adapted from Contraceptive Technology, 19th Revised Edition, Hatcher, et al. (New York: 2007).

² Greene Foster, D. et al, "Number of Oral Contraceptive Pill Packages Dispensed and Subsequent Unintended Pregnancies," 2011, *Obstet Gynecol*, 177(3):566-72. doi: 10.1097/AOG.0b013e3182056309.

³ *Id.*

⁴ Jones RK, *Beyond Birth Control: The Overlooked Benefits of Oral Contraceptive Pills*, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2011.