

FAMILY ISSUE FACT SHEET

NO. 2019-10 (MAY 2019)

HB 2759/SB 1547 APPROPRIATIONS; DIRECT SERVICES; REFERRALS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Arizona Department of Health Services will distribute monies appropriated for the family health pilot program to a nonprofit organization to implement a statewide system to provide direct services, support services, social services case management, and referrals to the biological or adoptive parents of children under the age of two, including unborn children. The purpose of the statewide system is to encourage healthy childbirth, support childbirth as an alternative to abortion, promote family formation, aid successful parenting, and increase families' economic self-sufficiency.

With the use of both a physical and virtual clinic, the program will be available to residents of all counties of the state.

THE PROGRAM

The family health pilot program is designed to reach pregnant women that are often unaware of the services available to them or do not know how to access them. For these women, providing a supportive voice paired with meaningful assistance is enough to give them the confidence to choose to continue their pregnancy.

A similar program in Texas has found that the majority of women considering an abortion are doing so because of social or economic challenges: finances (66%), employment (57%), stable housing (46%), and transportation (19%). Of those women, 76% state that they would continue their pregnancy if not for those challenges.

Therefore, the program in Texas provides supportive counseling, comprehensive social services needs' assessment, comprehensive care plan to address major needs, assistance identifying and accessing needed public and private social programs in client's community, regular and ongoing follow-up, and virtual childbirth and parenting classes. By providing these services, 53% of clients choose to forego an abortion and instead continue their pregnancy.

In the Texas program, the monies are used for 1) direct-to-client advertising in a concerted outreach marketing effort to reach individuals not aware of the existence of alternative services; 2) personnel, including a team of registered nurses, social workers, and care agents; 3) operating expenses, including rent, utilities, software licenses, and other expenses related to program services; and 4) administrative expenses related to program management and oversight.

TALKING POINTS

1. The family health pilot program is designed to reach pregnant women that are often unaware of the services available to them or do not know how to access them. For these women, providing a supportive voice paired with meaningful assistance is enough to give them the confidence to choose to continue their pregnancy.
2. Planned Parenthood receives millions in taxpayer money. It is time to put more money behind Arizona's values of caring for women and their preborn children.
3. The program supports Arizona as a state that values life, and that values meeting the needs of pregnant women and their preborn children.
4. A similar program in Texas has found that the majority of women who seek an abortion do so because of social or economic challenges. By providing an array of services to assist with these challenges, 53% of the program's clients choose to forego an abortion and instead continue their pregnancy.

CONCLUSION

The family health pilot program is a practical way for the state to meet the needs of pregnant women and their preborn children. A similar program in Texas has had outstanding results. Combining a concerted outreach marketing effort to reach individuals not aware of the existence of alternative services, with a care team of nurses, social workers, and caregivers has empowered half of the program's clients seeking an abortion to continue their pregnancy.