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**Campaign Launches to Increase Access to Medication Abortion  
on California Campuses**

**Private Funder Collaborative Announces It Will Cover All Start Up Costs**

SACRAMENTO, CA.—Today, California students and advocates launched justCARE: Campus Action for Reproductive Equity, a campaign to bring the abortion pill to campus health centers across California. The campaign aims to lift barriers to abortion care on California campuses.

Recognizing the barriers to abortion access, Senator Connie M. Leyva (D-Chino) introduced SB 320, the College Student Right to Access Act, legislation to expand medical abortion services on California campuses.

In fact, while campus health centers provide quality health care at low or no cost to students across California, no clinics on California public campuses now provide abortion care, and many do not have an abortion provider close by. Once a student has made the decision to end a pregnancy, it can be difficult to raise the money to travel and pay for care or find transportation.

“As students, we are balancing classes, work, community, and family while trying to build our future. We shouldn’t be forced to leave campus, drive for hours, or see a provider we don’t know to get health care that could be available on campus,” said Adiba Khan

“This disproportionately harms low-income students. Offering abortion care on campus means students can get care wherever we live or go to school.”

In response to early campus organizing on this issue, the Women’s Policy Institute, a program of the Women’s Foundation of California, helped craft a legislative solution to remove this unnecessary barrier. And, as a result of this widespread support and enthusiasm for ensuring that all California college students have access to reproductive health services, including abortion, a group of private funders have come together to cover the costs of implementation for providing the abortion pill on California campuses.

“Students, including those who are already parents, face many barriers to accessing the full range of sexual and reproductive health services,” said **Ruth Shaber MD, Tara Health Foundation**. “These barriers disproportionately harm students of color, low-income students, and first-generation college students. That’s why we’re proud to support the justCARE campaign to bring the abortion pill to California public campuses.”

Findings on the benefits of passing SB 320 and providing medication abortion to students and the state of California include:

- Every month, up to 519 students at the 34 University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) campuses seek medication abortion at off-campus clinics.
- Sixty-two percent of students would need to spend 2 hours or more on public transit to access abortion. For some students, this travel time is as much as four or six hours. (More than two-thirds of UC students and one-third of CSU students do not have a car.)
- Students wait an average of one week for an appointment for abortion off-campus. The delay can make a student ineligible for early medication abortion, increasing the costs of care.
- Student health centers have the potential to offer medication abortion at a lower cost than what is currently charged out-of-pocket at off-campus providers.

A second study explored the capacity of UC and student health centers to provide medication abortion and found:

- The staffing, facility, and equipment requirements to provide medication abortion are minimal, and researchers believe it would be feasible to provide this care at these public colleges in California.
- Visiting clinicians and telemedicine could be models to provide medication abortion at sites that have limited internal capacity.
- For about half of UC students, existing health insurance coverage is available to reimburse for abortion care at student health centers.
- Students in underserved areas face multiple barriers to abortion, including a lack of providers, inability to use their insurance locally, and difficulty finding transportation to more distant services.

The full assessment of the barriers to medication abortion faced by public university students can be found [here](#). The full research report detailing the findings on UC's and CSU's capacity to provide medication abortion on campus can be found [here](#).

The abortion pill is a safe and effective option for ending a pregnancy that has been used in the U.S. since the FDA approved it in 2000. Yet students often struggle to access abortion: campus health centers do not provide abortion services, many students do not have transportation, and going off campus for health care can be financially and logistically prohibitive.

The justCARE campaign was started when students at UC Berkeley started speaking out about the need for abortion care on campus. Now, students and allies across the state are working together to lift the barriers to abortion care on campus.

“California students have made their voices heard on the need for abortion care on campus,” said **Surina Khan, CEO, The Women’s Foundation of California**. “We are proud to be among the funders who believe in the students’ vision and have come together to ensure that this care is available. Together we can lift the barriers to abortion and show once again that California is the gold standard of what it means to provide comprehensive health care.”

Campus health centers are well equipped to safely provide medication abortion and many already offer other reproductive health services including birth control and STI testing.

“California’s higher education system has more students enrolled in institutions of higher learning than any other state in the country,” said **Sen. Leyva**. “These students turn to campus health centers to provide quality care including sexual and reproductive health care at low or no cost. Yet no public campus provides access to medication abortion. We can and will ensure that all students have access to their fundamental right to reproductive care.”

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**justCARE: Campus Action for Reproductive Equity** mobilizes students and allies across California to make the abortion pill on campus a reality. We envision a future where reproductive health services are available to all students who need them, wherever we live or go to school.

*\*Data sourced from [National Center for Education Statistics](#).*