

## HB 841/SB 1006 Would Do Nothing to Improve Sex Education in Florida

Under current Florida law, K-12 schools are only required to teach “the benefits of sexual abstinence” and “the consequences of teenage pregnancy” as part of sex-ed.

This bill does nothing to address current shortcomings and instead requires the Department of Education to develop instructional materials for students that include information on prenatal care and adoption. These materials are then prohibited from including “any component of human sexuality education” that would not be taught in a science classroom.

When Oklahoma passed a very similar law last year, there was widespread criticism about what this law would mean for Oklahoma students’ education and critics raised concerns about what subjects might suffer to make room in the school day for the mandated education program. “Adding yet another mandate on [teachers] and forcing them to have those very emotional and political conversations with young people just takes away instructional time from other areas,” Oklahoma State Representative Emily Virgin said.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, in Oklahoma – a state with less than one-fifth the population Florida<sup>2</sup> – a fiscal impact statement prepared by the state Department of Education estimated that it would cost up to \$160,000 to develop materials for the program and that implementing it at each school district would cost about \$10,000 per high school, or \$4.78 million total.<sup>3</sup> If Florida has over five times the population of Oklahoma, this bill could cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars to enact.

***It is important to equip young people with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy decisions.***

Nearly 750,000 teenagers in the United States will become pregnant this year alone, and half of the 20 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases every year are diagnosed in young people ages 15-24. Evidence shows the best way to help American teens make responsible decisions and stay healthy is to give them comprehensive sex education.

***Every national, state or local poll on sex education shows that parents, teens and the general public overwhelmingly support comprehensive sex education that includes information on topics such as birth control, abstinence, healthy relationships and STD prevention.***

An October 2012 nationwide survey found parents overwhelmingly support school-based sex education programs and believe that school-based programs should cover a range of topics, including birth control. Ninety-three percent of parents believe birth control should be covered in high school sex ed programs, and 78 percent believe this information should be provided in middle school. Over 95 percent of parents said STDs should be covered in both middle and high school programs, and a majority of parents said that sexual orientation should be covered in both middle and high school sex ed programs.

Last Updated 03/022017

1. Proposal on teaching when life begins could be costly to implement, Tulsa World (Mar. 20, 2016), [http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/capitol\\_report/proposal-on-teaching-when-life-begins-could-be-costly-to/article\\_c3cd1e57-17c4-5b8b-afe0-d611a6d84694.html](http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/capitol_report/proposal-on-teaching-when-life-begins-could-be-costly-to/article_c3cd1e57-17c4-5b8b-afe0-d611a6d84694.html).  
2. Compare <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045216/40> with <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045216/12>.  
3. Proposal on teaching when life begins could be costly to implement, Tulsa World (Mar. 20, 2016), [http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/capitol\\_report/proposal-on-teaching-when-life-begins-could-be-costly-to/article\\_c3cd1e57-17c4-5b8b-afe0-d611a6d84694.html](http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/capitol_report/proposal-on-teaching-when-life-begins-could-be-costly-to/article_c3cd1e57-17c4-5b8b-afe0-d611a6d84694.html).