

Amendment 3563 – Strikes the creation of a new \$375 million government program intended to promote personal and financial responsibility.

Among the new government programs created by the Senate health care bill is an initiative costing \$375 million over five years intended to promote personal and financial responsibility.

This government “responsibility” program duplicates existing government programs, adds hundreds of millions of dollars to the national debt, and creates perverse financial incentives for states to encourage abortion to receive additional federal funds. In short, there is nothing responsible about the new responsibility program.

This amendment would strike the new program and save \$375 million.

The Initiatives Paid For By This New Program Duplicate Existing Government Programs, Many Which Have Failed To Demonstrate Effectiveness, That Cost Billions of Dollars A Year

The Senate health care bill creates at least 70 new government programs. One of these is the Personal Responsibility Education program makes available \$75 million in new spending annually for five years for a total cost of \$375 million.

According to the bill’s text, the program is intended to educate adolescents on a number of topics including:

- Abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS;
- Healthy relationships, such as positive self-esteem and relationship dynamics, friendships, dating, romantic involvement, marriage, and family interactions;
- Adolescent development, such as the development of healthy attitudes and values about adolescent growth and development, body image, racial and ethnic diversity, and other related subjects;
- Financial literacy;
- Parent-child communication;

- Educational and career success, such as developing skills for employment preparation, job seeking, independent living, financial self-sufficiency, and workplace productivity; and
- Healthy life skills, such as goal-setting, decision making, negotiation, communication and interpersonal skills, and stress management.
- While these skills are important for young people to learn, parents and teachers, not the federal government, are the best source of this knowledge.
- In fact, the federal government already provides billions of dollars every year for efforts that duplicate all of these initiatives contained within the new Personal Responsibility Education program. In 2009, the federal government appropriates \$10.5 billion for programs intended to support adolescent family life, abstinence, prevention of teen pregnancy, family planning, financial education, youth training, and other initiatives similar or identical to the Personal Responsibility Education program.
- Many of the existing programs have not even proven to be effective.
- For example, the program provides federal funding for education on “dating” to prevent HIV/AIDS and other STDs. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which would administer this program, has previously funded similar programs intended to prevent HIV/AIDS that provided instruction on flirting and how to have relationships with prostitutes.
- On August 13, 2003, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funded a class entitled “Flirt, Date, Score” at the Stop AIDS Project of San Francisco which was advertised as “Want to flirt with greater finesse and date with more confidence? Who doesn't? Share your expertise and hear how others are successful in meeting guys and staying safe today.”¹
- On February 10, 2004, the CDC funded another Stop AIDS Project dating workshop that was advertised as instructing participants how “to flirt with greater finesse.” The event was entitled “Got Love? #2 - Flirt / Date / Score.”²

¹ STOP AIDS Project of San Francisco website, <http://www.stopaids.org/programs/events/index.html> , accessed August 13, 2003.

² STOP AIDS Project of San Francisco website, <http://www.stopaids.org/programs/events/index.html> , accessed February 2004.

- Positive Force in San Francisco, which also offered flirting classes, received \$1 million a year from the CDC.³

The new Personal Responsibility Education program also provides federal funding for education on “relationship dynamics” to prevent HIV/AIDS and other STDs. Again, the federal government already funds education programs on all types of relationships.

One such program that made headlines was an event entitled “Men for Hire,” which featured speaker was Joseph Itiel, who, it was advertised, “presents practical tips and covers the seven guidelines for safe and friendly relations with escorts.” Mr. Itiel has authored a number of books, including *A Consumer’s Guide to Male Hustlers* (which purports to “acquaint readers who have a vigorous sexual appetite with a resource”) and *Sex Workers As Virtual Boyfriends*. Shortly after the event, he released *Escort Tales: The Trophy Boy and Other Stories*. According to the *Bay Area Reporter*, Mr. Itiel argues sleeping with a sex worker is a way to engage in safe sex, “If you pick up a sex worker, you have complete control of the situation. ... If you go to a sex club, you can have sex with say 10 people who had sex with another 10 people. If you go to a sex worker, you couldn’t afford to see someone 10 times a day. Plus, he has less sex and is exposed to fewer diseases, logically.”

Not surprisingly, reviews of these programs have failed to demonstrate their effectiveness.⁴

CDC’s HIV/AIDS prevention grants were found to have “widespread deficiencies,” according to a HHS Inspector General (IG) report. The IG noted that the programs demonstrated a pattern of mismanagement, a lack of oversight, and in at least one documented example, a willingness of a CDC employee to make up grantee accomplishments simply to keep his projects running. According to the IG, many such programs “lacked clear, specific objectives providing a basis for assessing grantees’ accomplishments, and, in fact, [some] grants contained no objectives at all.”⁵

³ John McCaslin. “Inside the Beltway; Chocolate and condoms,” *The Washington Times*, August 13, 2002.

⁴ “CDC Off Center,” Senate Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and International Security Minority Office, June 2007, http://coburn.senate.gov/public/_files/CDCOffCenter1000.pdf.

⁵ “Management of HIV/AIDS Prevention Grants by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,” HHS IG, September 2005, A-04-03-08011, <http://www.oig.hhs.gov/oas/reports/region4/40308011.pdf>.

The statistics speak for themselves:

- The number of new HIV infections occurring in the U.S. has not decreased in over 15 years despite the government spending hundreds of billions of dollars every year on prevention programs. CDC estimates that approximately 56,300 Americans are now newly infected with HIV in a single year.⁶
- One in four teenage girls is infected with a STD, according to a new study published in the journal *Pediatrics*. The research found that 24.1 percent of girls between the ages of 14 and 19 tested positive for at least one STD, including human papillomavirus (HPV), herpes, trichomoniasis, and chlamydia.⁷
- CDC estimates that there are approximately 19 million newly acquired STDs each year in the U.S. and almost half of those are among young people 15 to 24 years of age. The largest number of reported cases of both chlamydia and gonorrhea is among girls between 15 and 19 years of age, followed closely by young women 20 to 24 years of age.⁸

While these statistics demonstrate that effective initiatives are needed to prevent STDs and other health risks, to our youth, it is irresponsible for Congress to create another costly government program that duplicates existing programs that are not working without improving, consolidating, or eliminating the existing programs.

⁶ "HIV/AIDS Basic Statistics," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, February 26, 2009, <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/basic.htm#hivest>.

⁷ Jennifer Warner. "1 in 4 Teen Girls Has an STD; Sexually Transmitted Infections Surface Soon After Teenage Girls Become Sexually Active," WebMD.com, <http://www.webmd.com/sex/news/20091123/1-in-4-teen-girls-have-sti>.

⁸ "Sexually Transmitted Diseases in the United States, 2008; National Surveillance Data for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, November 16, 2009, <http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats08/trends.htm>.

A Government That Amassed A \$12 Trillion Debt Has No Credibility Lecturing Its Citizens About Personal And Financial Responsibility

Among the initiatives that would be promoted by the federal government through the new Personal Responsibility Education program are “financial literacy” and “financial self-sufficiency.”

The federal government, which is now \$12 trillion in debt and riddled with hundreds of billions of dollars waste, mismanagement, duplication, and ineffective programs, has little credibility educating Americans about financial responsibility.

The Personal Responsibility Education program will be paid for by borrowing money from our grandchildren and foreign countries and will be duplicating numerous existing government initiatives that have failed to achieve their goals. There is *nothing* responsible about that.

The federal government is now borrowing 43 cents for every dollar that it spends. That means that the government will borrow over \$150 billion over the next five years to pay for this program.

This debt will be added to the nearly \$12 trillion already borrowed by the government. And since the federal government has nearly reached its debt limit set by law, Congress and the President are already planning to increase the national debt limit to pay for the 70 new programs, including Personal Responsibility Education, created by the Senate health care bill.

Despite its interest in creating a new government program to promote personal and financial responsibility, Congress has grown more and more irresponsible handling the nation’s finances:

- The 2009 fiscal year federal budget deficit set an all-time record of \$1.42 trillion. That was \$958 billion above the 2008 deficit, the previous record.

- October was the 13th straight month the federal government spent more than it brought in — another record—and it also marked the fifth-largest monthly deficit ever.
- The Obama Administration expects this year’s deficit to reach \$1.5 trillion, which would mark the third straight record annual deficit. The Administration projects the deficit will remain above \$1 trillion in 2011 and will never drop below \$739 billion over the next decade.
- In relation to the overall economy, the 2009 deficit was 9.9 percent of the total gross domestic product, the highest level since 1945.⁹

Furthermore, important retirement programs like Medicare and Social Security are on the verge of bankruptcy. Medicare is expected to run out of money and become insolvent in 2017. Social Security will run out of money in 2020 and will no longer be able to pay retirees full benefits by 2037.¹⁰ Other important government programs Americans rely on nearly every day, such as the Highway Trust Fund and the U.S. Postal Service, are also spending more than they are bringing in with revenues.

Clearly, Congress and the federal government are in no position to lecture or educate Americans about responsibility, especially fiscal responsibility.

The Program’s Requirement For States To Reduce Birth Rates Creates A Federal Financial Incentive To Promote Abortion

To receive federal grants from the Personal Responsibility Education program, states must establish goals and a plan for reducing “birth rates” for “youth populations.”

⁹ MARTIN CRUTSINGER and DANIEL WAGNER. “Federal deficit sets October record of \$176.4B,” Associated Press, November 12, 2009, <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5iWWPT8cAUpUCsmOZoABze-6XhwTAD9BU69F81>.

¹⁰ “2009 Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance and Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Funds,” May 12, 2009, <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/ReportsTrustFunds/downloads/tr2009.pdf>.

There is nothing in the bill text that prohibits the promotion of abortion to reduce birth rates and the language even seems to suggest the use of abortion.

Specifically, the bill requires goals for reducing “birth rates” for “pregnant youth who are under 21 years of age” along with other youth populations that “have special circumstances.” Unless the bill is referring to future births by pregnant girls, which it clearly does not state, the only obvious manner to reduce birth rates among those who are already pregnant is abortion.

Regardless of the intent, there are no provisions that would prohibit abortion from being used to reach the goals required by states to be eligible for millions of dollars of federal funds. Clearly, this creates a perverse financial incentive for states to promote abortion among young girls.