



## FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

### BACKGROUNDER

#### PREGNANCY SUPPORT SERVICES

#### SUPPORT: SB 1130 (Bean); HB 969 (Toledo)

##### BACKGROUND:

The Florida Pregnancy Support Services Program (FPSSP), through a network of 100 pregnancy support centers throughout the state, provides pregnancy support services to women and their families. These centers are local, non-profit organizations that provide support and assistance to women and men faced with difficult pregnancy decisions. In addition to free pregnancy tests, peer counseling and referrals, centers offer classes on pregnancy, childbirth, parenting, and life skills. Clients are eligible to receive services for up to one year after the child's birth.

The program was created in 2005 and the Florida Department of Health has received an annual appropriation of \$2 million for operational expenses since its inception. In the 2016-17 budget year, the appropriation was increased to \$4 million and proviso language expanded the program to include women's wellness services.

##### BILL PROVISIONS:

- Codifies the Florida Pregnancy Support Services Program in Florida Statutes
- Defines program requirements including:
  - 90 percent of contract funds be used for direct clients services
  - Background screenings of all paid staff and volunteers who provide direct services to eligible clients who are minors, elderly, or have a disability
  - Informational materials must be current and accurate, with reference source of medical statements
  - Contract management through the Department of Health, annual compliance monitoring, and defined contract deliverables

##### RATIONALE:

Approximately 59% of Florida pregnancies in 2010 were unintentional, significantly higher than the national rate of 36%. \* 38% resulted in abortion. \*\*

In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, the FPSSP served 24,184 clients, provided 120,929 services, and handled 5,756 phone calls to its helpline. Even for those who support abortion, increased awareness of abortion alternatives ensures authentic reproductive choice.

Establishing the program in statute ensures more favorable consideration under the current budget process.

\* [https://www.gutmacher.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/stateup10.pdf](https://www.gutmacher.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/stateup10.pdf)

\*\* <https://www.gutmacher.org/fact-sheet/state-facts-about-unintended-pregnancy-florida>

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