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May 19, 2008

Sen. John McCain

Dear Senator McCain:

We appreciate your support for abstinence education as a U.S. Senator and ask you to continue this support as a Presidential candidate.

Millions of youth across the United States are making better health decisions because of the skills they learn in their abstinence education classes. A growing body of research provides compelling evidence that youth who receive abstinence education are about 50-percent less likely to initiate sexual activity as their peers. Those who are sexually active are no less likely to use a condom, but have fewer partners. Sexually experienced students are more likely to discontinue their sexual activity as a result of the skills and encouragement they receive in their abstinence education classes.

Avoiding sexual activity is the only way to completely avoid the risk. The CDC recently revealed that 1 in 4 teen girls have at least one STD. Only abstinence education adequately addresses this epidemic since the most common STDs can be transmitted even with the use of a condom.

Beyond the physical consequences, however, there are also significant potential emotional consequences to adolescent sexual activity. Only abstinence education helps teens avoid all of the possible costs by empowering them to make decisions that benefit their overall health.

Abstinence is a message that resonates with youth. More and more teens are choosing to abstain but continued support for this initiative is essential given the highly sexualized culture in which they live.

We trust that we can count on your continued support for the sexual health of America's youth by your continued support for abstinence education.

Sincerely,