



FAMILY ISSUE FACT SHEET

No. 2008-03 (February 2008)

Alternatives to Abortion Funding

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Agencies that provide alternatives to abortion are an invaluable resource for women dealing with the difficult choices that come with an unexpected pregnancy. In 2006, the Arizona Legislature appropriated \$500,000 in the Department of Health Services budget for grants to agencies that help pregnant women seeking alternatives to abortion. This appropriation was renewed in 2007. The grants provide a variety of services and programs, including outreach programs that are related to pregnancy and up to twelve months after birth. Only non-profit centers that offer services to women but do not promote, refer for, or perform abortions are eligible to receive these grants.

BACKGROUND

In 1996, Pennsylvania implemented the program Women In Need (WIN), also called “Real Alternatives” (www.realalternatives.org) with the purpose of providing support for clinics that aid women in unexpected pregnancy situations. The state appropriated \$2.1 million dollars to support these centers in their work with women, but in three years the program was so successful in decreasing the number of abortions that the legislature doubled the appropriation to \$4.2 million. In 2005 alone, Pennsylvania saw abortions drop by three percent. This was directly attributed to the Real Alternatives program.¹ The program has served over 100,000 women since its inception.²

Arizona women need the support that agencies similar to those in Pennsylvania can give them. Centers throughout Arizona provide vital support to women who find themselves in these difficult situations. These agencies offer alternatives to women who choose not to have an abortion. Arizona’s grant program for these agencies was implemented in the 2006 legislative session and renewed in 2007. In the first year of the program, these agencies reported using the funds for a variety of services ranging from counseling to extending the number of hours a nurse practitioner could be in the office to help pregnant women with health needs.

TALKING POINTS

- **Women deserve to know what alternatives to abortion exist.** Agencies providing alternatives to abortion provide services to pregnant women including education, housing, and material needs. Because of their non-profit status, these centers exist for the sole purpose of helping women with the choices that they face; they provide information, options, and help.
- **Pennsylvania has seen a decrease in the number of abortions performed since the beginning of Project WIN.** Supporting these agencies will help them reach out to more women, giving them hope and enabling them to choose life.
- **Alternative agencies provide an invaluable service to society by both protecting life and serving women with unexpected pregnancies.** It is in Arizona's interest to assist these centers in their vital work.

CONCLUSION

Agencies offering alternatives to abortion help Arizona women in crisis pregnancy situations to be informed about their options and provide them with the resources they need to choose life for their babies. This grant program has been in effect only for a very short period of time, but already evidence can be seen of the impact these grants are having on crisis pregnancy situations, with very little cost to the state. The Arizona Legislature should renew the funding in order to see how effective the grants are at saving the lives of unborn children and providing invaluable services to many Arizona women.

¹ Real Alternatives, Inc. Pennsylvania Abortions Drop 3% in 2005. *Real Alternatives, Inc. Press Release*. Retrieved January 17, 2008, from <http://www.realalternatives.org/aboutus/AbortionsDown.htm>

² Alternatives to Abortion Services Program. (2007, December 17). *Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare*. Retrieved January 17, 2008, from <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/ServicesPrograms/Other/003670201.htm>