
Councilmember Marion Barry

Councilmember Carol Schwartz

Councilmember Harry Thomas, Jr.

Councilmember Mary Cheh

Councilmember Yvette Alexander

Councilmember Kwame Brown

Councilmember Muriel Bowser

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Councilmember Schwartz introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee on _____.

To establish a law that would provide emergency contraception to victims of sexual assault who request such treatment, and to require that hospitals inform sexual assault victims of their option to be provided emergency contraception.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Emergency Contraception and Information for Sexual Assault Victims Establishment Act of 2007”.

Sec. 2. Findings.

The Council of the District of Columbia finds that:

(1) In the United States, approximately 25,000 women become pregnant each year as a result of sexual assault.

(2) In 2006, 319 sexual assaults were reported to the Metropolitan Police Department and 122 have been reported thus far in 2007.

(3) Only twenty-eight percent of sexual assaults are reported to the police.

(4) It is imperative that all hospitals provide emergency contraception as a treatment option to any woman that has been sexually assaulted.

(5) Emergency contraception prevents pregnancy by keeping a woman's egg from leaving the ovary, and does not terminate pregnancy.

Sec. 3. Establishment and purpose.

There is established a requirement for every hospital to provide information about and the treatment option of emergency contraception to sexual assault victims who request such treatment. The purpose of this bill is to ensure that all hospital emergency rooms provide emergency contraception as a treatment option to any woman who seeks treatment as a result of a sexual assault; to require hospitals providing care to victims of sexual assault to provide medically factual information about emergency contraception; to provide emergency contraception immediately to each victim who requests it; and to require the Department of Health to produce medically factual information in the form of brochures/pamphlets relating to emergency contraception for the prevention of pregnancy in sexual assault victims for distribution to and use in all emergency rooms.

Sec. 4. Definitions.

For purposes of this act, the term:

(1) “Emergency contraception” means a drug, without exception to a pill form, approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration that prevents pregnancy after sexual intercourse due to sexual assault.

(2) “Sexual assault victim” means a woman who alleges or is alleged to have been sexually assaulted and attends a District of Columbia hospital for treatment related to that assault.

Sec. 5. Duties of the Department of Health.

The Department of Health shall produce informational brochures and/or pamphlets regarding the medical facts of emergency contraception, and shall distribute such informational materials to all District of Columbia hospitals that treat sexual assault victims.

Sec. 6. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (84 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

Sec. 7. Effective date.

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.