**Sample Op-Ed or Blog and General Tips**

**[Identify personal connection to primary message: More than 600,000 women in North Carolina live in contraceptive deserts]**

* Women are struggling financially and barriers to access contraception further limit their resources and their ability to live life on their own terms.

**[Explain contraceptive deserts in North Carolina]**

* An estimated [637,430](https://powertodecide.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/PTD_Press%20Release_SC_Statefacetsheet.pdf) women living at or below 250% of the poverty level in North Carolina live in contraceptive deserts, counties in which there is not reasonable access to a health center offering the full range of contraceptive methods.

* This means women struggling to make ends meet must incur additional costs such as transportation, child care and taking unpaid time from work just to get the type of contraception they need. [**Add** local story or example if possible].
* Across the country, more than 19 million U.S. women in need live in [contraceptive deserts](https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/access/birth-control-access).

**[North Carolina could take the following steps to** [**expand access to contraception**](https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/access/state-policy/rh-access-policies)**]**

* Expanding Medicaid to childless adults would help decrease the percentage of uninsured women, and by extension, give them contraceptive coverage.
* Allowing pharmacists to prescribe contraception and requiring insurance to cover an extended supply of prescription contraceptives can make it easier to access some contraceptive methods.
* North Carolina can also guard against additional barriers to access by enacting policies that protect insurance coverage of the full range of contraceptive methods.

**[Conclusion – Sample ideas below]**

* Women in North Carolina who live in contraceptive deserts face costs for transportation, child-care and taking unpaid time off from work just to access basic health care.
* Expanding access to contraception is important in North Carolina in order to help the more than 600,000 women in need currently living in contraceptive deserts, and so many others who are striving to achieve their educational, career, economic, and family goals.
* Birth control has widespread support. For one, nearly all women (99%) who have ever had sex with men [have used contraceptives at some point in their lives](https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/resource-library/everyone-loves-birth-control).
* [The majority of adults (76%)](https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/resource-library/survey-says-thxbirthcontrol-november-2019), believe that birth control is a basic part of women’s health care. Further, 86% of adults, support access to all birth control methods with broad support  [regardless of race, region, and political affiliation](https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/resource-library/survey-says-thxbirthcontrol-november-2019).
* Access to contraception is more important than ever.
* COVID-19 is putting front and center the need for women to be able to access birth control in a variety of ways.
* COVID-19 is having a significant impact on the health and economic security of people nationwide.
* The pandemic has also changed our approach to health care and highlights the opportunity to deliver access to care in innovative ways.