President Obama's signing of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) in March of 2010 was a groundbreaking step forward for public health. With a focus on insurance reform, the law created new consumer protections and pathways for increasing access to health care coverage to approximately 4 million Californians and 32 million people nationwide. As a result, access to sexual and reproductive health care is expected to significantly expand on both the state and federal levels. While the authors of the ACA included some clear directives in historic legislation, several aspects of the law have yet to be finalized, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty but also opportunity. In an effort to ensure that the intent of the ACA is fully realized throughout the implementation process, California Family Health Council has developed the following principles as a guide for protecting and expanding access to high-quality preventive and cost-saving sexual and reproductive health care in our changing health care environment.

1. Access to Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health Care Must Remain for All Californians.
2. Access to Confidential Services Must Be Preserved.
3. Family Planning Providers Must Receive Fair and Adequate Reimbursement Based on Cost.
4. A Highly Skilled and Trained Family Planning Workforce Must Be Enhanced and Maintained.
5. Quality Sexual and Reproductive Health Care Must Be Integrated in the Health Home Model.
6. Enrollment and Eligibility Functions Must be Streamlined and Accessible.
7. Family Planning Providers Must Remain Access Points for the Patients that Rely on their Services.
8. California's Exchange Network Must Be Adequate to Fully Meet the Needs of All Enrollees.

California Family Health Council will be putting these principles to work on the state and federal levels in the coming months. If you have any questions and/or would like to partner in this effort, please contact Amy Moy, Vice President of Public Affairs, at moya@cfhc.org/415.518.4465.