



Nashville & Middle Tennessee

24 Hour Crisis & Support Helpline 1-800-334-4628

March 6, 2020

2019 - 2020
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Rep. David Hawk
Suite 406 Cordell Hull Bldg.
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Chairman Hawk,

On behalf of the YWCA of Nashville & Middle Tennessee, I am writing in support of HB 2529 sponsored by Rep. Ron Travis. It is critical that Tennessee expand the TennCare program so that low income, single Tennesseans can access our state's health care coverage program.

The YWCA is the largest provider of domestic violence services in the middle Tennessee region. Last year, the YWCA's Weaver Domestic Violence Center served more than 550 women and children who fled violent households. The YWCA provides survivors of domestic violence safe shelter, food, counseling and support groups, and connections to other vital services in the community. What we cannot offer, and what many single women we serve cannot access after they leave our shelter, is health care coverage. Adequate health care is essential for victims to heal from their physical and emotional injuries.

Please consider the circumstances of domestic violence survivors who are single women without children. A recent survey at our emergency shelter found that more than one third of residents were not able to access insurance. Only three percent of our residents could afford private insurance, and the remainder were able to obtain TennCare only if they had their minor child/children in their custody. Fear of the loss of health care coverage is a factor which causes some women to return to their abusers. There is a troubling disparity for survivors of domestic violence in our state—a disparity that prevents many women from living safe and self-sufficient lives.

I urge you to support the revival of Insure Tennessee in HB 2529 so that ALL the women we serve—those with and without children—have access to quality, affordable health care coverage.

Sincerely,

Sharon K. Roberson
President & CEO

CC: Rep. Ron Travis