

Resolution for Healthy Family Formation

WHEREAS, Texas Family Code Sec. 2.013 PREMARITAL EDUCATION COURSES “encourages” each person applying for a marriage license to “attend a premarital education course of at least eight hours during the year preceding the date of the application for the license.”

WHEREAS, In 2011, the 82nd Legislature cut the **Healthy Marriage Development Program** which gave a discount to each person applying for a marriage license with proof of completion of premarital education course. This program came about as a result of legislation that was passed in 2007. Under this law, the marriage license fee was doubled from \$30 to \$60, with the option of having the new \$60 license fee waived if the couple chose to take a premarital workshop. Research showed that these premarital programs cut divorce by 30%.

WHEREAS, As part of the reworking of the nation's **welfare** system in 1996, Congress enacted Section 510 of **Title V** of the Social Security Act to promote abstinence education within public schools. The purpose of the allotment of funds is to enable the State to implement sexual risk avoidance education with an unambiguous “message to youth that normalizes the optimal health behavior of avoiding nonmarital sexual activity.”

WHEREAS, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Funds are “monthly cash assistance payments to low-income families with children, as well as a wide range of services that are designed to address one or more of the program’s four broad purposes:

- Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives
- End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and **marriage**
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock **pregnancies**
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of **two-parent families.**”

THEREFORE, The Texas Legislature should pass legislation dedicated to the **Sanctity of Marriage** including but not limited to:

- **Healthy Family Formation** programs with messages on Abstinence Outside of Marriage and Recommitment to Abstinence;
- **Premarital** Education that provides a discount on Marriage Licenses;
- Strengthen and Support for **Families** by removing disincentives for Marriage and Children and funding programs such as Fatherhood, Risk Avoidance (Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, Sexual Risky Behavior), Communication Patterns, Financial/Debt, Reconciliation Education; and
- Promote **Reconciliation** rather than Mediation or Divorce, fund Divorce Education, require Full and Fair Disclosure of Consequences of Divorce, establish a two-year Waiting Period, and remove unilateral no-fault divorce.

THEREFORE, the state of Texas _____ party should adopt a Plank for the Sanctity of Marriage:

Plank #xxx. Sanctity of Marriage. Texas should protect the sanctity of marriage by providing resources and incentives to promote and protect healthy family formation without compromising religious liberty. Texas should encourage premarital education to strengthen marriages and give a discount on marriage licenses for couples that complete premarital education. Texas should restore the “Healthy Marriage Development Program” that was defunded in 2011. Federal funding, including Title V and TANF funds, should not violate Texas laws which includes prohibiting abortion providers or affiliates. Title V and TANF Federal funding should be used for risk avoidance education, premarital education, Fatherhood programs, reconciliation education, and divorce education.

A copy of this resolution should be sent to the _____ County/Senate District # _____ Convention Resolutions Committee from Precinct # _____ with the recommendation that it be passed and sent to the State Convention Platform Committee of the _____ Party of Texas.

Sources:

<https://guides.sll.texas.gov/marriage-in-texas/premarital-education>

<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/FA/htm/FA.2.htm#2.013>

<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/HR/htm/HR.31.htm#31.015>

https://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title05/0510.htm

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ofa/programs/tanf/about>