

UNCOMMON KNOWLEDGE

What happens to birth control if the Affordable Care Act is repealed?



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Demonstrators protest against religious objections to offering contraception coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

By Kevin Lewis | JUNE 30, 2017

If Republicans "repeal and replace" Obamacare with something less generous, there may be unintended consequences. A study found that Massachusetts health reform (which was a model for Obamacare) increased the birth rate among married women ages 20 to 34 in Massachusetts by around 1 percent, as births became more affordable. Meanwhile, the birth rate among unmarried women of the same age group decreased by around 8 percent, as contraception became more affordable. In other words, relatively more babies were born in wedlock than out of it.

Apostolova-Mihaylova, M. & Yelowitz, A., "Health Insurance, Fertility, and the Wantedness of Pregnancies: Evidence from Massachusetts," Contemporary Economic Policy (forthcoming).

