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OPINION

Women's voices must be heard in contraception debate

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Rep. Elijah E. Cummings' piece ("Why I demanded a voice for Sandra Fluke," March 21) resonated with me as a family physician in and a resident of Baltimore City. Every woman should have access to affordable contraception, regardless of where she works or her socioeconomic status. As part of the legislative process, hearings are necessary. But to silence women in this process is uncalled for.

Today, I write for Sandy, who works at a Catholic hospital in Baltimore. She came to me seeking help for her heavy, long periods. Oral contraceptives would have

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I also write for Michelle. Her insurance did not cover the cost of a long-acting, reversible, hormonal contraceptive, an expensive but extremely effective form of birth control, which was Michelle's first choice. While attempting to save for it, she returned to me with an unplanned pregnancy.

The Affordable Care Act will make it possible for all the Sandys and Michelles of Baltimore, and this nation, to have access to affordable contraception. I too will do my part to let their voices be heard as we continue this long fight to protect women's health.

Dr. Z. Sheena Barnes, Baltimore

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Topics: Health, Family Planning, Elijah Cummings

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