

Coalition Letter in Support of Planned Parenthood

The Honorable Mitch McConnell The Honorable Paul Ryan
Senate Majority Leader Speaker of the House
317 Russell Senate Office Building 1233 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Senate Minority Leader House Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building 233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510 Washington, D.C. 20515

January 2017

Dear Senate Majority Leader McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and House Minority Leader Pelosi,

The undersigned organizations stand united in support of Planned Parenthood and the millions of women, men, and young people who rely on Planned Parenthood health centers every day. We oppose any attempt to block patients from accessing the high-quality, affordable health care that Planned Parenthood provides.

In 2014, Planned Parenthood health centers served 2.5 million patients, providing over 4 million sexually transmitted infection (STI) tests and treatment, 360,000 breast exams, 270,000 Pap tests, and birth control for 2 million people. One in five women has visited a Planned Parenthood health center for care in her lifetime, and many rely on Planned Parenthood as their primary health care provider. These health centers play a critical role in providing access to primary and preventive care to many people for whom it would be otherwise inaccessible. Seventy-five percent of Planned Parenthood's patients have incomes at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level, and more than half of Planned Parenthood's 650 health centers are located in rural or medically underserved areas.

The current defunding effort is the latest phase in a long- discredited smear campaign against Planned Parenthood premised entirely upon highly edited and misleading videos which alleged wrongdoing by Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers. Since the release of those deceptive videos, these allegations have been investigated extensively and rejected by multiple congressional committees and thirteen different state investigations, which have found no evidence of wrongdoing. In fact, a Texas grand jury tasked with investigating Planned Parenthood instead indicted the makers of these falsified videos.[1] An additional eight states decided not to open an investigation at all, citing the lack of credible evidence.[2] After a year and a half of exhaustive investigation, it is clear that there are no facts or evidence to support blocking Medicaid patients from accessing one of the nation's leading providers of high-quality, affordable care. Rather, this defunding campaign is part of the broader agenda to restrict access to safe, legal abortion and other reproductive health care.

There is no doubt that if this attack succeeds, many patients will lose access to a range of basic preventive health care services, including birth control, STI and cancer screenings, and other lifesaving care—and low income families will be hit hardest. If Congress were to block all Medicaid patients from

seeking care at Planned Parenthood health centers, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that 390,000 women would lose access and up to 650,000 women could face reduced access to preventive care within a year.[3] Many of the organizations signing this letter work on behalf of those who rely on Planned Parenthood's compassionate, high quality care and know how important it is that it continues to be available to those who need it. We stand behind Planned Parenthood's dedication to assisting their patients and advocating for women throughout the country.

We write in support of the millions of patients who could lose access to vital care if Planned Parenthood health centers are forced to close their doors. This politically-motivated attack on Planned Parenthood is an attack on the ability of women, men, and young people to make personal health decisions, including whether and when to become parents. It is an attack on the well-being and economic security of those who are already most in need. We urge you to stand with us and oppose any attempt to block patients from seeking care at Planned Parenthood.

Sincerely,

A Better Balance
A is For
AccessMatters
Advocates for Youth
African American Ministers In Action
AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts
Alliance for Justice
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Civil Liberties Union
American Medical Student Association
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
Anti-Defamation League
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
Atlanta Women for Equality
Atlanta Women's Center
AVAC
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
BiNet USA
Black Women's Health Imperative
Catholics for Choice
Center for American Progress
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)
Center for Reproductive Rights
Cherry Hill Women's Center
Civil Liberties and Public Policy Program
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR)
Communications Workers of America
Delaware County Women's Center
Disciples Justice Action Network
Emergency Medical Association , INC
EMILY's List
Equality for HER
Family Equality Council
FORGE, Inc.

Forward Together
Gender Justice
Gender Spectrum
Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network (GSA Network)
Girls Inc.
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc.
Hartford GYN Center
Human Rights Campaign
Human Rights Watch
Ibis Reproductive Health
Institute for Science and Human Values
International Women's Health Coalition
Ipas
Jewish Women International (JWI)
John Snow, Inc. (JSI)
Lady Parts Justice League
Lambda Legal
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Maine Women's Lobby
MergerWatch
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Movement Advancement Project
NA'AMAT USA
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NARAL Pro-Choice Virginia
National Abortion Federation
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of Social Workers
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
National Council of Jewish Women
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Health Law Program
National Institute for Reproductive Health
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
NMAC
Nursing Students for Sexual & Reproductive Health
Our Bodies Ourselves
PAI
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Philadelphia Women's Center
Physicians for Reproductive Health

Population Connection Action Fund
Population Institute
Positive Women's Network - USA
Pride at Work
Pro-Choice Resources
Public Justice Center
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need
Religious Institute
Reproductive Health Access Project
Secular Coalition for America
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
SisterLove, Inc.
SisterReach
SisterSong: National Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective
The American Medical Student Association
The Breeding Ground
The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado
The National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
The Sea Change Program
The Voter Participation Center
Transgender Law Center
UltraViolet
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
United We Dream
Urban Justice Center
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Voices for Progress
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
West Fund
Western States Center
Witness to Mass Incarceration
Women Donors Network
Women for Women
Women of Reform Judaism
Women's Law Project
Women's Medical Fund, PA
Women's Voices.Women Vote Action Fund

[1] Manny Fernandez, "2 Abortion Foes Behind Planned Parenthood Videos Are Indicted," The New York Times, Jan.25, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/26/us/2-abortion-foes-behind-planned-parenthood-videos-are-indicted.html>.

[2] The Planned Parenthood witch hunt, WASH. POST, Feb. 20, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-planned-parenthood-witch-hunt/2016/02/20/a6cb0e5c-d660-11e5-b195-2e29a4e13425_story.html.

[3] CBO. (2015, September 16). "Cost Estimate: H.R. 3134 Defund Planned Parenthood Act of 2015." Washington, DC: CBO, <https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/114th-congress-2015-2016/costestimate/hr3134.pdf>