

Family Planning Coalition

c/o National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
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November 9, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray, Co-Chair
United States Senate
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling, Co-Chair
United States House of Representatives
129 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Max Baucus
United States Senate
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Fred Upton
United States House of Representatives
2183 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Kerry
United States Senate
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dave Camp
United States House of Representatives
341 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jon Kyl
United States Senate
730 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
United States House of Representatives
1226 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman
United States Senate
338 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James Clyburn
United States House of Representatives
2135 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Pat Toomey
United States Senate
502 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States House of Representatives
1707 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Members of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction:

As you seek to fulfill your charge to issue a formal recommendation to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion over the next ten years, the undersigned members of the Family Planning Coalition call on you to protect the critical, cost-saving programs that provide sexual and reproductive health care to millions of women, men, children, and families.

We ask that you oppose any cuts to Title X, Title V, the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (TPPI), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP), and that you oppose any efforts to undermine the full implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

These vital public health programs, and the expansion of health care coverage through the ACA to millions of people who currently lack access, are much-needed investments towards improving the health of women, men, children, and families across the country. Despite the need, funding for these programs has come under attack. Having already sustained cuts of up to 5.5% from previous years, additional cuts would devastate these programs and further burden states and communities struggling to meet the ever-increasing need for family planning, sexual, and reproductive health services.

Both the number and the percentage of people living in poverty has increased in nearly every US state and city since 2009.^[1] Now, when a growing number of Americans are in need of help, it is unconscionable for Congress to make further cuts to the support services that low-income, uninsured, and underinsured families need to be healthy. We cannot continue to fray the public health safety net that supports them, especially now.

Together, these public health programs promote healthy women, men, children, and families, and reduce preventable health care costs:

Title X provides high-quality, cost-saving, family planning services and other preventive health care to low-income or uninsured individuals who may otherwise lack access to health care;

Title V provides and ensures mothers and children have access to high-quality maternal and child health services, especially for those with low incomes or those living in areas with limited availability;

TPPI funds medically accurate, age-appropriate, and evidence-based programs to reduce teen pregnancy and underlying behavioral risk factors; and

NCHHSTP is responsible for public health surveillance, prevention research, and efforts to prevent and control HIV/AIDS, other STDs, viral hepatitis, and TB.

^[1] Lisa Lambert, "Poverty rates up in most U.S. states, cities: Census," *Reuters*, October 20, 2011, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/10/20/us-usa-states-poverty-idUSTRE79J83O20111020?feedType=RSS&feedName=domesticNews>.

Title X, Title V, TPPI, and NCHHSTP are integral components of the public health safety net that millions of low-income, uninsured, and underinsured Americans rely on every day for their health care needs.

Increasing access to these and other critical health services is a core tenet of the ACA. Any efforts to undermine the ACA through the withholding of funds to adequately implement its provisions are essentially efforts to maintain the barriers patients currently face in accessing care.

Programs that help vulnerable populations should not be at the forefront of any discussion to reduce the federal deficit. We ask you to take a balanced approach to deficit reduction that does not start with, or unfairly rely on, cuts to family planning and other preventive health programs serving millions, particularly poor and low-income Americans.

The Family Planning Coalition urges you to protect funding for family planning, sexual, and reproductive health through Title X, Title V, TPPI, and CDC's HIV/AIDS and STD Prevention programs, and to support increased access to health coverage through continued ACA implementation.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Jesseca Boyer at the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association at jboyer@nfprha.org or 202-293-3114.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Youth
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Medical Student Association
American Nurses Association
American Social Health Association
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
Black Women's Health Imperative
Jewish Women International
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Council of Jewish Women
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Organization for Women
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Health Network

Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Connection
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Institute
Reproductive Health Technologies Project
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S.
SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy