



December 21, 2012

The Honorable Jeffrey Zients
Acting Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Zients:

As organizations committed to advancing access to reproductive health care, we are thankful for President Obama's leadership in building a health care system that meets the needs of all Americans. Working towards that goal, **the Family Planning Coalition respectfully requests that you call for a significant investment in Title X by funding the program at \$327 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014.**

Title X is the only federal funding dedicated to providing family planning services for under-served populations, but recently the program has seen devastating cuts – while a total of \$23.6 million has been cut from the program over the past two fiscal years, these reductions hit Title X providers in a single calendar year. As a result, health centers across the country have been forced to close while others reduced patient hours, limited services, and laid off staff. Along with the negative impacts these cuts have had on health center closings and jobs, the consequence of these cuts for low-income patients nationwide is now in evidence: preliminary data for 2011 show a precipitous decline in the number of patients served in Title X, and this decline directly correlates to the significant funding cuts that the program experienced in 2011.

At a time when more individuals are turning to the safety net for health care services, it is critical that the Title X program receives the resources it needs to continue providing quality care to patients across the country. Title X is an integral part of this public health safety net, and plays an especially important role in the lives of low-income women since it is the only infrastructure support program focused on women's health services. Annually, Title X serves over 5 million low-income women and men at over 4,500 health centers. The vast majority of Title X patients are poor and low-income. ***Seventy percent of patients have incomes at or below the federal poverty level (FPL)—meaning they earn less than \$11,170 per year.*** Title X services help women plan pregnancies, thereby helping to prevent nearly one million unintended pregnancies each year. In addition to providing vital contraceptive services, Title X health centers provide other essential preventative health care, comprehensive sex education, and counseling.

The most recent cuts to Title X funding are a series of politically motivated attacks in Congress; anti-family planning members in Congress have routinely tried to eliminate the program and have successfully pushed for reductions in Title X funding. Simultaneously, hostile states have taken action to limit the reach of Title X funds by barring providers from Title X participation, thus cutting health care access for the most vulnerable citizens.

Title X providers are under extreme pressure to keep up with increasing costs and greater patient demands for care. The 7.4% loss of funding in 2011 came after the largest growth of patients served by the Title X network in more than a decade, an increase of more than 170,000 women, men, and teens between 2008 and 2010. Unfortunately, the recent funding cuts have reversed this trend and - in just one year, between 2010 and 2011 - the program experienced a decline of over 200,000 patients.

Now more than ever, it is essential that the Administration focus on investing in programs that are both cost-effective and deliver critical services. Investment in Title X is important, not only for the millions of patients currently seeking care in the Title X network, but also for the millions of individuals who will gain health coverage thanks to the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The ACA will change how care is delivered in this country—bringing millions more patients into a health care system that is already struggling to meet demand. It is imperative that the Administration increase its investment in the Title X family planning program in order to help build the strong infrastructure necessary to provide preventive care to the millions of Americans gaining coverage in 2014. Our concern is based on actual experience: when Massachusetts implemented its health reform law, women's health care providers had the largest increase in wait times—an average of 70 days for women to access OB/GYN services due to a lack of providers. Today, safety net providers like Title X health centers provide health care for the most vulnerable populations, a role that will undoubtedly continue—and more likely expand—when full ACA coverage expansion begins in 2014.

Therefore, the Family Planning Coalition requests \$327 million for the Title X program in FY 2014 to begin meeting the family planning needs of low-income women, men, and teens. If we do not take significant efforts to strengthen the infrastructure now, the network will be unable to serve the millions of patients who will be turning to these providers in 2014. The Coalition looks forward to working with you to strengthen America's only dedicated family planning program and invest in the critical health infrastructure that Americans deserve.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

AIDS United
American Association of Birth Centers
American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Medical Student Association
American Social Health Association
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
Catholics for Choice
Center for Women Policy Studies
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Metropolitan Community Churches
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Council of Jewish Women
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Health Law Program
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Women's Health Network
Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health
Population Institute
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
Union for Reform Judaism
Women of Reform Judaism