

June 23, 2021

Senator Patty Murray, Chairwoman  
Senator Roy Blunt, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate, SD-131  
Washington, DC 20510

Organization: Family Planning Coalition, on behalf of 68 national organizations

Subcommittee: Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies

Department: Health and Human Services

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Ranking Member Blunt,

The 68 below organizations represent millions of health care providers, researchers, program administrators, community advocates, and, most importantly, people who seek publicly funded family planning services. We urge you to demonstrate strong support for this essential health care by allocating a substantial increase in funding towards the \$737 million needed for the Title X family planning program within the Office of Population Affairs when writing the fiscal year 2022 (FY2022) Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) bill.

Title X is the only federal program dedicated to providing family planning services for people with low incomes. In 2018, prior to the implementation of the Trump administration's devastating new program rules, nearly 4,000 health centers in the network served close to 4 million patients.<sup>1</sup> Title X-funded health centers are lifelines in their communities, providing high-quality reproductive and sexual health care, including cancer screenings, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS education and testing, contraceptive services and supplies, pregnancy testing, and other vital health care services. These centers work with communities that face systemic barriers to accessing quality health care, including people with low incomes, people with no or insufficient insurance, people of color, people who live and work in rural areas, LGBTQ people, and young people. In fact, a 2018 study found that 60% of women who received contraceptive services from a Title X-funded health center in 2016 had no other source of medical care in the prior year,<sup>2</sup> and almost two-thirds of patients at these sites have incomes at or below the federal poverty level.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Christina Fowler et al, "Family Planning Annual Report: 2018 National Summary," RTI International (August 2019). <https://www.hhs.gov/opa/sites/default/files/title-x-fpar-2018-national-summary.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Meghan Kavanaugh, "Use of Health Insurance Among Clients Seeking Contraceptive Services at Title X-Funded Facilities in 2016," Guttmacher Institute (June 2018). <https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2018/06/use-health-insuranceamong-clients-seeking-contraceptive-services-title-x>.

<sup>3</sup> Christina Fowler et al, "Family Planning Annual Report: 2019 National Summary," RTI International (September 2020). <https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/title-x-fpar-2019-national-summary.pdf>.

Unfortunately, Title X-supported providers cannot do this important work without federal funds, and current funding levels are woefully inadequate to meet community needs. Title X has been cut or flat-funded every year for the past decade, and the program's FY2021 allocation is just \$286.5 million. This level is well below the \$737 million that researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Office of Population Affairs, and the George Washington University determined in 2016 would be needed annually just to provide family planning care to low-income women without insurance.<sup>4</sup> We urge you to take a substantial step forward for family planning access and adopt that recommended figure for FY2022.

This funding increase is particularly vital given the harms the Trump administration inflicted on the program, the providers funded by it, and, most importantly, the people who seek family planning and sexual health care. On July 15, 2019, that administration's new regulations for Title X went into effect, and the impact was felt almost immediately: by fall 2019, approximately 1,000 health centers across 33 states had withdrawn from the program. In 2018, those health centers had provided 1.6 million patients with high quality, Title X-supported family planning and sexual health services.<sup>5</sup> In September 2020, the Office of Population Affairs released the first federal data showing the impact of the rule, and the results were devastating: relative to 2018, Title X-funded health centers provided family planning services to 844,083 fewer patients in 2019, a staggering 21% decrease, and that was after just five months of having the rule in effect. In addition, fourteen states lost more than one-third of their patient volume. This drastic decrease translated to hundreds of thousands of fewer contraceptive services provided, more than 1 million fewer STD tests administered, and more than 250,000 fewer life-saving breast and cervical cancer screenings performed with Title X funds.<sup>6</sup> The numbers for 2020 are even worse, with preliminary data showing that only 1.5 million people were able to benefit from Title X-funded services in 2020, a drop of 60% from just two years earlier.<sup>7</sup> Six states – Hawaii, Maine, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, and Washington – have now had no Title X-funded services for almost two years.

Compounding these harms, a 2020 study shows the COVID-19 pandemic has led many women to want to delay or prevent pregnancy while it has simultaneously made it more difficult for people to access family planning and sexual health care, including contraception. Women of color and women with low incomes are more likely to report both findings.<sup>8</sup> The perfect storm of the Trump administration's rule and a global pandemic mean that a significant influx of funds

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<sup>4</sup> Euna August, et al, "Projecting the Unmet Need and Costs for Contraception Services After the Affordable Care Act," *American Journal of Public Health* (February 2016): 334-341.

<sup>5</sup> Mia Zolna Sean Finn, and Jennifer Frost, "Estimating the impact of changes in the Title X network on patient capacity," Guttmacher Institute (February 2020). <https://www.guttmacher.org/article/2020/02/estimating-impact-changes-title-x-network-patient-capacity>.

<sup>6</sup> Christina Fowler et al, "Family Planning Annual Report: 2019 National Summary," RTI International (September 2020). <https://opa.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/title-x-fpar-2019-national-summary.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Ensuring Access to Equitable, Affordable, Client-Centered, Quality Family Planning Services, 86 Federal Register 19812 (proposed April 15, 2021) (to be codified at 42 CFR 59).

<sup>8</sup> Lindberg LD et al, "Early Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Findings from the 2020 Guttmacher Survey of Reproductive Health Experiences," Guttmacher Institute (June 2020). <https://www.guttmacher.org/report/early-impacts-covid-19-pandemic-findings-2020-guttmacher-survey-reproductive-health>.

is desperately needed to begin to rebuild the network and bring the full range of Title X services back to communities across the country as quickly as possible.

These funds will be particularly significant given the Biden administration's commitment to restore the Title X program's commitment to high-quality, client-centered, evidence-based care by fall 2021.<sup>9</sup> That process is moving quickly: on April 15, HHS published a notice of proposed rulemaking, and comments were due on May 17.<sup>10</sup>

We recognize that an increase to \$737 million is substantial. With a new administration supportive of family planning, we believe now is a critical opportunity to increase appropriations for the program. We are also strongly supportive of a currently circulating Senate Dear Colleague letter requesting \$512 million for the program, itself a significant step toward the needed \$737 million.

We thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact Lauren Weiss at the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association with any questions – her contact information in below the list of signatories.

Advocates for Youth  
AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children,  
Youth & Families  
AIDS United  
Alliance for Justice  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Atheists  
American College of Obstetricians and  
Gynecologists  
American Public Health Association  
American Sexual Health Association  
American Society for Reproductive  
Medicine (ASRM)  
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care  
Association of Schools and Programs of  
Public Health  
Black AIDS Institute  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Catholics for Choice  
Center for Biological Diversity  
Center for Reproductive Rights

Endocrine Society  
Guttmacher Institute  
Healthy Teen Network  
HIV + Hepatitis Policy Institute  
HIV Medicine Association  
Ibis Reproductive Health  
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive  
Justice  
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's  
Reproductive Justice Agenda  
International Women's Health Coalition  
Ipas  
Jacobs Institute of Women's Health  
Jewish Women International  
March of Dimes  
Medical Students for Choice  
NARAL Pro-Choice America  
NASTAD  
National Abortion Federation  
National Asian Pacific American Women's  
Forum (NAPAWF)

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<sup>9</sup> Office of Population Affairs, "Title X Statutes, Regulations, and Legislative Mandates," US Department of Health and Human Services (March 2021). <https://opa.hhs.gov/grant-programs/title-x-service-grants/title-x-statutes-regulations-and-legislative-mandates>.

<sup>10</sup> Ensuring Access to Equitable, Affordable, Client-Centered, Quality Family Planning Services, 86 Federal Register 19812 (proposed April 15, 2021) (to be codified at 42 CFR 59).

National Association of County and City  
Health Officials  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners  
in Women's Health  
National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Coalition of STD Directors  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Family Planning & Reproductive  
Health Association  
National Health Law Program (NHeLP)  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive  
Justice  
National Medical Association  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Women's Health Network  
National Women's Law Center  
Nurses for Sexual and Reproductive Health  
PAI

People For the American Way  
Physicians for Reproductive Health  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Population Connection Action Fund  
Population Institute  
Power to Decide  
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice  
Reproductive Health Access Project  
SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
The AIDS Institute  
The American Society for Reproductive  
Medicine  
The Well Project  
Treatment Action Group  
Union for Reform Judaism  
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender  
Equity  
Women of Reform Judaism

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