

FY 2018 Funding for Family Planning: House Proposal

Devastating Cuts to the Public Health Safety Net

On July 19, 2017, the House Appropriations Committee passed an appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies for fiscal year (FY) 2018. The bill included a \$5 billion cut relative to FY 2017 and eliminated or drastically reduced several critical public health programs, including the Title X family planning program. Several votes to lift funding levels and fund some of these crucial programs, including Title X, failed in committee.

Basics of the FY 2018 Appropriations Process

- Congress must pass, and the president must sign, a complete appropriations package or a continuing resolution by September 30 to avoid a government shutdown.
- House appropriators have proposed large cuts to non-defense programs and increases for defense programs. These assumptions violate the caps set by the Budget Control Act, setting the stage for a lengthy debate moving forward. The Senate has not yet started work on appropriations given its focus on repealing the Affordable Care Act.
- The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education are considered under one appropriations bill, known as "Labor-HHS." This measure is typically the most controversial and very rarely passes both the House and Senate as a stand-alone bill. This year House appropriators have committed just \$156 billion to these departments - \$5 billion less than FY 2017. This reduction has necessitated extreme cuts to many important programs.

Family Planning in the House Proposal

- The House proposal eliminates Title X. While this is not surprising - the House did so every time it considered a Labor-HHS bill between FY 2010 and FY 2017 - it represents a very real threat to the program. It is also particularly troubling given that the president's budget request proposed level funding for the program.
- The House proposal includes a rider that would bar discretionary federal funds from the three impacted departments from going to Planned Parenthood. This ban would devastate the ability of Planned Parenthood to offer health services and create additional strains on an already over-taxed family planning safety net. This ban does not impact Planned Parenthood's eligibility for Medicaid reimbursement.
- Other items of note include:
 - The inclusion of a rider to ban all research on fetal tissue collected from an abortion.
 - The inclusion of a rider to create a private right of action to enforce, and dramatically expand, the Weldon Amendment, which allows health care providers to opt-out of providing abortion care. This rider would diminish access to important reproductive health services by impacting both insurance policies and health care staffing.
 - Level funds federally qualified health centers' Section 330 grants at \$1.5 billion.
 - Level funds the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant at \$642 million.

- Level funds the CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STIs, and TB prevention at \$1.1 billion, while the CDC as a whole receives a \$198 million cut.
- Level funds the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program at \$2.3 billion.
- Level funds the Rural Health program at \$156 million.
- Level funds the Social Services Block Grant at \$1.7 billion.
- Eliminates the evidence-based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program and increases funding for the abstinence-only Sexual Risk Avoidance program by \$5 million.

Recommended Talking Points & Supporting Data

- The House appropriations bill would decimate access to family planning services by eliminating Title X, a bedrock public health program that provides high-quality preventive health care to millions of low income people and cutting off appropriated funds to Planned Parenthood.
 - A 2016 study published in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that Title X would need \$737 million annually to meet the need for publicly funded family planning in the United States.ⁱ Rather than meet this need, Congress has steadily cut funding, from \$317 million in FY 2010 to just \$286.5 million in FY 2017. Funding cuts have already meant more than 1.2 million fewer patients were served in 2015 than were in 2010.ⁱⁱ
- The bill being advanced comes with enormous risk and sacrifice to the public's health.
 - In 2015, Title X-funded providers served more than 4 million patients at 3,951 service sites across the country. Two-thirds of those patients lived below the poverty line (\$11,770 for a single person and \$24,250 for a family of four that year), and almost half were uninsured.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - In 2014 alone, Title X-funded health centers helped prevent approximately 904,000 unintended pregnancies through contraceptive use.^{iv}
 - In 2010, Title X facilities helped to prevent over 99,000 chlamydia infections, over 13,000 cases of pelvic inflammatory disease, almost 3,700 cases of cervical cancer, over 2,100 deaths from cervical cancer, and over 400 HIV infections.^v
- Eliminating Title X is out-of-touch with the majority of Americans, including Republicans.
 - In the February 2017 debate on the House floor on H.J.Res 43, Representative Martha Roby (R-AL) said, "*I think we all agree that low-income women should have access to essential Title X services.*"
 - A clear majority (more than 80%) of Americans support broad access to contraception. Seventy-five percent favor continuing Title X, including 66% of Republicans.^{vi}

ⁱ Euna August et al, "Projecting the Unmet Need and Costs for Contraception Services After the Affordable Care Act," *American Journal of Public Health* 106 (February 2016): 333–341.

ⁱⁱ Christina Fowler et al, "Family Planning Annual Report: 2015 National Summary," RTI International (August 2016).

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Jennifer Frost, Lori Frohwirth, and Mia Zolna, "Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2014 Update," Guttmacher Institute (September 2016).

^v Jennifer Frost et al, "Return on investment: a fuller assessment of the benefits and cost savings of the US publicly funded family planning program," *Milbank Quarterly* 92 (December 2014): 696–749.

^{vi} "Survey Says: Birth Control Support," The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy (2017).