

National
Family Planning
& Reproductive Health Association

***Media Outreach and Social
Media Promotion***

Protect Contraceptive Coverage

On March 23, 2016, the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in *Zubik v. Burwell*, a challenge to the Obama administration's accommodation for religiously affiliated nonprofit organizations that object to providing contraceptive coverage for their employees. A ruling in favor of the plaintiffs could have troubling repercussions on women's access to care in this country. **Especially now, everyone across the country should stand firmly in support of a woman's access to the contraceptive coverage required under the health law.**

Make your voice heard on social media

Hashtag: #SaveHerCare

Message: Women deserve access to contraceptive coverage no matter where they work or go to school.

Sample Tweets:

- Contraception access is essential to women's health and equality and must be protected.
- No employee should have her benefits taken away because of her employer's religious beliefs.
- In *Zubik v. Burwell*, some employers are trying to use religion to block access to the essential health coverage women count on.
- **[Name of Organization]** strongly supports the contraceptive coverage requirement in the #ACA!
- Contraception = essential preventive health care! 99% of women have used it in their lifetime.
- We're watching #SCOTUS today in support of the contraceptive coverage requirement in the #ACA.
- Access to contraception keeps families strong. @**[Name of organization]** supports the contraceptive coverage requirement in the #ACA.
- We must hold the line between religious accommodation and protecting the health and rights of those impacted by such accommodation.

Sample Facebook posts:

- The ACA's contraceptive coverage requirement was a historic achievement for women's health. Thanks to the law, millions have guaranteed access to preventive health benefits, including a full range of contraceptive methods. The Supreme Court hears arguments against the requirement today in *Zubik v. Burwell*, and **[name of organization]** stands firmly in support of a woman's access to the contraceptive coverage required under the health law.
- We believe women deserve coverage of high-quality family planning care that helps them improve their economic security, care for their families, and achieve optimal health.
- **[Name of organization]** is committed to ensuring family planning coverage for all women, regardless of employer, income, or insurance status. We urge the Supreme Court to uphold the protections in the Affordable Care Act.
- The contraceptive coverage requirement allows women to choose the best contraceptive method for them, without cost being an obstacle. In doing so, this important benefit furthers women's health.
- Contraception is critical to women's health because it allows women to treat conditions and prevent unintended pregnancy, which can have negative health consequences for women and children.
- Every year, half of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended. Regular use of contraception prevents unintended pregnancy, improves women's health outcomes, and saves millions of dollars in health care costs.
- As the Supreme Court hears *Zubik v. Burwell* today, it must recognize that good reproductive health is achieved when women are given full access to the family planning care and information they need to make the best decisions for themselves and the ones they love.

Share Graphics

Click on any image below to download and share with your family, friends, and colleagues on social media. These and other NFPRHA-branded share graphics are available on [NFPRHA's Flickr page](#).



Social Media Tips

Social media is an important communications tactic that can help raise visibility of your advocacy activities. Below are a few pointers to get you started.

- **Know your audience.** Begin to follow and engage with people and organizations that are within the field and doing interesting things on social media. Cross promote others' social media content on your platforms. Women are more likely to make health decisions for their family, and they're more likely to go online for health information than men.
- **Make it personal and actionable.** Providing your audiences with compelling information that is one click away will improve the likelihood that they will take action.
- **Encourage sharing.** Make it easy for people to share your advocacy messages by using sites such as Facebook and Twitter. If you want people to retweet, make sure your tweets are shorter than the 140 character maximum.
- **Plan your work.** Create an editorial calendar for the week ahead that includes resources and social media content to share with your networks.

Sample Op-Ed/Letter to the Editor

Note: The below opinion piece is around 500 words. Please consider using this sample for a letter to the editor (250-300 words) or adding more context/detail for an opinion piece (450-700 words). Check your newspaper's word limit requirements before submitting.

Suggested Title: Supreme Court Should Protect Contraceptive Coverage

Two years after the Supreme Court ruled in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby* that closely held for-profit companies do not have to comply with the Affordable Care Act's contraceptive coverage requirement if the company's owners have moral or religious objections, this important health benefit is going back to the High Court.

[Next week], the Supreme Court will hear *Zubik v. Burwell*, a challenge to the Obama administration's accommodation for religiously affiliated nonprofit organizations that object to being required to providing contraceptive coverage for their employees. Under the accommodation, all

they need to do is fill out a form stating their objection to opt out of having to provide coverage, and the insurance company provides the contraceptive coverage instead. But the groups challenging this accommodation argue that putting their objection in writing makes them party to something that goes against their beliefs.

Two years ago *Hobby Lobby* opened a dangerous door and now, with *Zubik*, these employers are trying to tear that door off its hinges—arguing the interests of employers far outweigh the health of their employees. Where do we draw the line between accommodating religious belief and protecting the health and rights of those impacted by such accommodation? With *Zubik*, some think they can erase the line. If the plaintiffs prevail, more women will lose their contraceptive coverage.

Plaintiffs argue that the accommodation is unacceptable because it is not the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling governmental interest. Plaintiffs have asserted that safety-net programs such as the Title X family planning program could simply step in to provide the coverage to which their employees are entitled by law. One of the nonprofit briefs even suggests redefining what it means to be “low-income” under Title X to include women who can’t get contraceptive coverage under their employer-based plan because their employer objects. That argument not only represents a misunderstanding of the program’s purpose and design, it’s foolhardy and dangerous.

Each year, half of all pregnancies in the United States are unintended. Regular use of contraception prevents unintended pregnancy, improves women’s health outcomes, and saves millions of dollars in health care costs. The Title X program was designed to meet the preventive health care needs of the millions of poor and low-income women and men who rely on it as their usual, and oftentimes sole, source of health care.

[Provide local perspective here.]

While [name of health center] provides care to anyone who comes through our doors, Title X was not designed nor is it funded to meet the contraceptive needs of women who otherwise have employer-based insurance coverage. Congress has never sufficiently funded the program to meet existing (and growing) need. At current funding levels, the program only serves about one third of the women in need of publicly funded family planning care in this country.

The Supreme Court should recognize that good reproductive health is only achieved when women are given full access to the family planning care and information they need to make the best decisions for themselves and the ones they love.

Name

City, State

Organization

Tips for Writing an Op-Ed or Letter to the Editor

Writing an opinion article for your local newspaper is an effective way to show your support for the contraceptive coverage requirement under the Affordable Care Act. Letters to the editor are usually submitted to a media outlet in response to a relevant news article. The letter should address the issue and provide your perspective on how to solve the problem or offer suggestions for change.

The following are tips to remember before you draft your letter:

- **Keep your letter short and to the point.** Newspapers typically limit letters to 150–300 words. However, opinion pieces can be up to 700 words. Check your local newspaper's submission guidelines, usually found online on the editorial page or letters-to-the-editor page. This is often the page where you can find how to submit your letter. Newspapers provide an online form or provide an e-mail address. If you send your letter via e-mail, include the letter in the body of the message. Do not send an attachment.
- **Make references to the newspaper.** While some papers print general commentary, many will only print letters that refer to a specific article. When drafting your letter, open with a specific reference to a recent news story, editorial or previous letter.
- **Be accurate.** Support your letter with facts, statistics, citations, or other evidence. You don't have to include references in your letter, but have citations ready if your newspaper's editor asks for them.
- **Optimize the chances for your letter to be published.** Elected officials carefully monitor newspapers to gauge local opinion. Mentioning your senators or representatives by name, and stating the specific legislative action you would like them to take, can guarantee that your letter will catch the attention of your members of Congress.

For technical assistance with placing a letter to the editor or op-ed in your local paper, contact Audrey Sandusky at asandusky@nfprha.org.