

# National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association

November 6, 2015

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

I am writing on behalf of the National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association (NFPRHA), a membership organization representing the nation's safety-net family planning providers—nurse practitioners, nurses, administrators and other key health care professionals. NFPRHA members provide free or subsidized voluntary, comprehensive, and culturally sensitive family planning and sexual health care services to poor and low-income individuals as well as those who are uninsured, underinsured, or seeking confidential services. This essential work is accomplished by participating in Medicaid and a combination of several non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs, including the Title X family planning program.

NFPRHA and its members are very grateful for your work to negotiate the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 and the sequestration relief that it contains. The network of providers that participate in the Title X program, the nation's only dedicated source of family planning funding, has faced significant hardship as a result of sequestration and politically motivated funding cuts in recent years. In fiscal year (FY) 2010, the program received \$317 million, shrinking to \$278.3 million in FY 2013 and finally leveling at \$286.5 million in FY 2014.<sup>i</sup> Correspondingly, Title X-funded health centers provided care to 1.1 million fewer patients between 2010 and 2014.<sup>ii</sup> Sequestration relief represents an opportunity to help make meaningful progress to restore Title X after several years of devastating cuts.

NFPRHA applauds your leadership in insisting upon a reasonable budget framework and respectfully requests your continued commitment to the safety net and affordable access to health care throughout the completion of the FY 2016 appropriations process. Even with the sequestration relief included in the budget deal, NDD funding for FY 2016 will be 12% lower than the FY 2010 level, when adjusted for inflation. By FY 2017 NDD spending will fall to its lowest level on record<sup>1</sup> as a share of the gross domestic product.<sup>iii</sup> Additionally, how much Title X, and the other programs on which the publicly funded family planning network relies, will benefit, if at all, from higher spending caps in upcoming appropriations bills is unclear.

Opponents in Congress have already made clear their intent to dismantle the publicly funded family planning network. From elimination of the Title X program in the proposed House Appropriations Committee FY 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies spending bill, to the 10% reduction in Senate's proposal, austerity measures have been used as a pretext for ideological attacks. NFPRHA respectfully requests that the White House remain vigilant in its defense of the family

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<sup>1</sup> Records date back to 1962.

planning safety net by refusing to sign any appropriations bill that funds the Title X program at less than the \$300 million included in your FY 2016 budget request from earlier this year.

We also hope that you will continue your vigilance in opposing appropriations bills that contain policy riders that are harmful to women's health. Over the past year, the publicly funded family planning network has experienced an unprecedented number of attacks from Congress, including a reconciliation package that prohibits Planned Parenthood from receiving Title X, Medicaid, and other federal funds. NFPRHA strongly opposes attempts to ban Planned Parenthood participation in federal programs. Such attempts would cripple the publicly funded family planning provider network in regions across the country, leaving patients with nowhere to go for preventive services and other essential health care. Moreover, the publicly funded family planning network relies on a diverse group of providers, like Planned Parenthoods, health departments, community health centers, hospitals, community action partnerships, and universities. Any legislation that attacks one of these provider groups threatens the integrity of the entire publicly funded family planning network and the health of the millions of people it serves.

NFPRHA looks forward to continuing to work as a partner with your Administration to bolster funding for the NDD programs that support the publicly funded family planning network and preventing harmful policy riders from becoming law. America's publicly funded family planning network ensures that our country's most vulnerable can access the care that keeps them healthy, and NFPRHA hopes that we can work together to keep that network strong.

Sincerely,



Clare Coleman  
President & CEO

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<sup>i</sup> Napili, A, *Title X (Public Health Services Act) Family Planning Program*, Congressional Research Service, July 31, 2015, <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL33644.pdf>, accessed October 31, 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> U.S. Office of Population Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, *Family Planning Annual Report: 2014 National Summary*, RTI International, Research Triangle Park, N.C.: 2015, <http://www.hhs.gov/opa/pdfs/title-x-fpar-2014-national.pdf>, Accessed October 30, 2015.

<sup>iii</sup> Greenstein, R, *CBPP Statement: Budget Deal, Though Imperfect, Represents Significant Accomplishments and Merits Support*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, October 27, 2015, <http://www.cbpp.org/press/statements/greenstein-budget-deal-though-imperfect-represents-significant-accomplishment-and>, accessed October 30, 2015.