



Oppose Efforts to Roll Back Protections that Ensure Access to Essential Health Care Under the Title X Family Planning Program

From birth control, to well-woman exams, to cancer screenings, millions of Americans nationwide turn to Planned Parenthood and other reproductive health providers as their trusted source of health care. Many of these Americans have low-wages or are uninsured and rely on important public health programs for affordable health care, including Medicaid and the Title X family planning program.

But people's access to health care is under attack across the country. In recent years, politicians in at least 14 states have taken action to block access to care through Title X, willfully ignoring the law, the recommendations of public health experts, and the clear and present need in their communities.

Now, anti-women's health Members of Congress are trying to use the Congressional Review Act to repeal an important protection that ensures women, men, and young people can see the provider of their choice under the Title X family planning program.

What does this rule do?

This [rule](#) helps ensure those most in need – those who have very low incomes or lack health insurance – still have access to lifesaving care such as cancer screenings, birth control, sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment, and well-woman exams through Title X. Among other things, it reinforces that it is against the law for states to block people from accessing care through Title X at a health center because the organization also provides safe, legal abortion. The rule garnered [widespread support](#) in the call for public comment, with [91% of the roughly 145,000 responses in favor of the rule](#).

What is the Title X Family Planning Program?

Title X helps ensure more than 4 million people have health care in this country. This is the only way that millions of women who have low incomes or are uninsured have access to birth control, cancer screenings, STI tests, and other basic care.

- Eighty-five percent of the people served by our nation's family planning program have incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and 48 percent are uninsured.
- In 2015 alone, Title X provided nearly 800,000 Pap tests, breast exams to 1 million women, nearly 5 million tests for STIs, and 1 million HIV tests.
- In fact, 6 in 10 women who access care from a family planning health center consider it their main source of health care. For 4 in 10, it's their only source of care (source: [Gutmacher](#)).
- Approximately 1.5 million Planned Parenthood patients benefit from the nation's family planning program, 78 percent of whom live with incomes of 150 percent of the federal poverty level or less, the equivalent of \$35,775 a year for a family of four in 2014. Approximately 20 percent of these patients identify as Latino/a; and approximately 15 percent identify as Black.

Planned Parenthood's critical role

- Planned Parenthood health centers provide care to approximately **1.5 million patients** served by the Title X. We serve roughly **one-third of the program's clients**, although Planned Parenthood health centers comprise 10 percent of publicly supported safety net family planning centers.
- Planned Parenthood health centers are located in the communities where access to care is most needed. More than half of Planned Parenthood's health centers across the U.S. are in rural and underserved communities with limited access to health care. Seventy-five percent of Planned Parenthood patients have incomes at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL).
- The idea that other providers could absorb Planned Parenthood's patients has been [resoundingly dismissed by experts](#). In fact, the American Public Health Association called the idea "[ludicrous](#)."
- Planned Parenthood health centers are also considerably more likely to offer Title X patients a broader range of contraceptive methods than other providers. In a [study](#) of Community Health Centers (CHCs), among CHCs that reported an independent family planning clinic in their largest site's community, 69 percent reported referring their patients to providers specializing in reproductive health services, like Planned Parenthood health centers, for family planning care.

Public health experts agree

- "Over the last 100 years, Planned Parenthood has played a critical role in advancing public health in this country," said **Georges C. Benjamin, MD, executive director of the American Public Health Association**. "For a century, their leadership and dedication to increasing access to the full range of reproductive health services has not wavered. Planned Parenthood is an integral part of our nation's health system."
- "For many women in America, Planned Parenthood is the only place where they are able to get needed quality care." – **Mark S. DeFrancesco, MD, MBA, FACOG, immediate past president of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists**
- "The assertion that community health centers could step into a breach of this magnitude is simply wrong and displays a fundamental misunderstanding of how the health care system works." - **Sara Rosenbaum, J.D., Founding Chair of the Department of Health Policy at George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health**
- "You can't just cut Planned Parenthood off one day and expect everyone across the city to absorb the patients." – [said Stephanie Taylor, Louisiana State Office of Public Health](#)

Blocking care at Planned Parenthood has devastating consequences

- After [Kansas](#) defunded Planned Parenthood and other reproductive health care providers, the number of people accessing birth control, cancer screenings, STI tests, and other care through the Title X program fell by more than 14,000.
- A recent study in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) showed that blocking patients from going to Planned Parenthood in Texas was associated with a 35% decline in women in publicly funded programs using the most effective methods of birth control and a dramatic 27% increase in births among women who had previously accessed injectable contraception through those programs.

- Blocking patients from care at health centers has a disproportionate impact on communities of color, who already face systemic barriers in accessing quality health care. For example, in [Texas](#), researchers found that more than half of women reported at least one barrier to reproductive health care. Spanish-speaking women from Mexico were more likely to report three or more barriers.

The Bottom Line

People across this country have faced political attacks on cancer screenings, birth control, and other basic care. By issuing this important protection, the Obama Administration made sure that politicians cannot ignore the law and stand in the way of the care that women need. We urge Congress to reject efforts to repeal this crucial protection through use of the Congressional Review Act.