



June 08, 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
Room H-218, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

On behalf of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, I would like to express appreciation for your past support of the Title X national family planning program and respectfully request that the program be included as a high funding priority in Fiscal Year 2010. Over the past 39 years, Title X has played a critical role in preventing unplanned pregnancy by offering the full range of family planning services, including counseling, contraception and related outpatient services. However, funding levels have been stagnant for many years and have not kept pace with the need. As such, we believe that the current level of \$307 million is insufficient and that the Title X program should be substantially increased to continue high-quality, cost-effective family planning services that help women and men avoid unplanned pregnancy.

Title X has a direct impact on reducing unplanned pregnancy by providing approximately five million low-income and uninsured individuals with access to high-quality contraceptive services, preventive screening, and health education. According to a recent report by the Guttmacher Institute, 17.5 million American women need publicly-supported contraceptive services. In 2006, about 9 million clients received publicly funded contraceptive services and of those served, 66 percent received services at Title X clinics. In addition, for every dollar spent on publicly funded family planning clinic services, the government saves \$4.02 in public sector maternal and infant care costs.

In spite of their successes, Title X clinics face significant new challenges, including a growing and increasingly culturally diverse clientele, new demands for counseling and clinical care, and sharply rising costs. Over time, expenditures for contraceptive supplies have increased at a faster rate than has Title X funding. In fact, when inflation is taken into account, funding for Title X is 61 percent lower today than it was in 1980. Had program funding kept up with inflation, it would now be at the level of

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\$787 million. Furthermore, Title X serves many who are not covered by other publicly-funded programs, such as individuals who are above state-determined income ceilings for Medicaid.

Additional funding for this key program is recommended in a recent report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) entitled, *“A Review of the HHS Family Planning Program: Mission, Management, and Measurement of Results.”* In calling for more funding, the IOM report notes the rising cost of supplies and services, including contraceptive drugs and devices. The report also describes the fact that in this tough economic environment, practitioners report increased demand for free or low-cost family planning services due to overall economic pressures and to the fact that many individuals are losing their health care coverage as part of losing their jobs.

For these reasons and others detailed in the IOM report, we respectfully urge you to provide additional funding for the Title X program with a goal of reaching at least \$700 million, an amount slightly lower than its inflation-adjusted level. A funding increase of this magnitude would go a long way towards meeting the current pressing need for low-cost family planning services. A strengthened Title X program will help reduce unplanned pregnancy and in turn make families stronger, enhance our workforce, reduce taxpayer burden, improve prospects for this generation and the next, and reduce the need for abortion.

As you develop the FY 2010 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill, we sincerely hope you will give serious consideration to increasing the nation’s investment in Title X. Please contact Lisa Shuger, Director of Public Policy, at 202-478-8576 or lshuger@thenc.org, for any further information regarding this request.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah S. Brown