

June 14, 2011

Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald
State Capitol 211 South
Madison, WI 53707

Senate Minority Leader Mark Miller
State Capitol 206 South
Madison, WI 53707

Assembly Majority Leader Jeff Fitzgerald
State Capitol 211 West
Madison, WI 53707

Assembly Minority Leader Peter Barca
State Capitol 201West
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Senate Majority Leader Fitzgerald, Assembly Majority Leader Jeff Fitzgerald, Senate Minority Leader Mark Miller and Assembly Minority Leader Peter Barca,

As organizations representing health care professionals who provide preventive and reproductive health care, organizations who serve Wisconsin women and families, patient advocates representing individuals who receive services at Planned Parenthood, public officials and public health professionals, we are writing to express our disappointment with the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) motion passed on May 18th, that bars state funding from going to Planned Parenthood clinics and urge no further provisions that seek to restrict access to women's health services.

Any proposal to exclude Planned Parenthood from state public health funding will hurt thousands of Wisconsin women's access to birth control, HIV testing and counseling, and breast and cervical cancer screening. Over 97% of the care their clinics offer is preventive. Every year Wisconsin Planned Parenthood clinics provide health care education and services to nearly 73,000 patients, provide 77,492 patient exams including cervical cancer screenings and breast exams, provide nearly 62,210 tests and treatments for sexually transmitted infections, 7,743 HIV tests and counseling and 752 colposcopies and treatment . These services improve women's health, lower the rate of unintended pregnancies, and decrease infant mortality.

The Joint Finance Committee motion preventing Planned Parenthood from receiving any state funding through the state family planning program specifically puts nine Planned Parenthood health centers at risk. These nine health centers provide comprehensive health care to over 12,000 patients and are often the only source of health care available to the patients they serve. These nine counties and services provided last year are identified in the following table:

County	Total Patients Served	Cancer Screenings	Birth Control Methods
Kenosha	3,008	423	9,626
Winnebago	2,006	492	10,299
Eau Claire	1,965	499	10,844
Shawano	483	75	2,569
Wood	1,515	362	7,688
Chippewa	526	142	2,627
Dodge	643	155	3,134
Fond du Lac	1,234	284	6,953
Jefferson	681	120	3,525
Totals	12,061	2,552	57,265

These services are provided to uninsured women and men in our communities. They are our clients, patients, neighbors, friends and family. If those individuals lose access to services we will likely see higher unintended pregnancy rates, STD rates and cancer that goes undiagnosed for too long. These negative impacts will take a human and financial toll on our communities. These patients have nowhere else to turn, nor should they have to. PPWI provides the highest quality reproductive health care efficiently and cost-effectively. Losing them as a health care provider in our community, will leave a huge void in our service delivery system.

In addition to the defunding of Planned Parenthood other critical health care and prevention programs are in jeopardy. This motion by the JFC also endangers Wisconsin's entire BadgerCare family planning program, which provides basic health care to 60,000 women, men and families and is reported to save the state of Wisconsin \$140 million annually by preventing unintended pregnancies.

At 27 health centers across the state, Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin is a key partner in community health systems. We believe in supporting this comprehensive system of health providers and are proud to partner with them to provide critical health care, especially to those uninsured and underinsured.

Since the state and federal law already prohibits health care providers from using any government funds for abortion, the JFC motion would only serve to cut funding for preventive care, including cancer screenings and contraception at Planned Parenthood health centers. We urge you to recognize the important role that Planned Parenthood health centers play in the lives of thousands of Wisconsin women and men and encourage funding to be restored to support these centers.

If you have any questions, please contact Sara Finger, at 608-251-0139 or sara.finger@wiawh.org.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics – Wisconsin Chapter
American College of Nurse-Midwives- Wisconsin Affiliate
American Congress of Obstetricians & Gynecologist – Wisconsin Section
City of Milwaukee Health Department
Family Planning Health Services
Jewish Family Services
National Association of Social Workers – Wisconsin Chapter
Reproductive Justice Collective
Watertown Department of Public Health
Wellness Center of Door County
Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
Westside Healthcare Association, Inc.
Winnebago County Public Health Department
Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health
Wisconsin Breast Cancer Coalition
Wisconsin Council on Children & Families
Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Wisconsin Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
Wisconsin Nurses Association
YWCA of Greater Milwaukee