

Family Planning Coalition

c/o National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association
1627 K St. NW, 12th Floor Washington, DC 20006 Tel: 202-293-3114 Fax: 202-293-1990

May XX, 2010

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW – Room 120 F
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

As organizations that comprise the Family Planning Coalition, we wish to thank you for your hard work and dedication to making health care reform a reality. As you work to implement the new law, we ask that you use the tools available to help strengthen the public health safety-net and in particular the Title X family planning program, by ensuring that the program receives FY 2010 funding from the Prevention and Public Health Fund established in the “Patient Protection and Affordable Care” Act.

The Family Planning Coalition appreciates the President’s leadership in requesting a nearly \$9.9 million increase for Title X in his FY 2011 Budget Request. However, as the percentage of uninsured women of reproductive age continues to rise as the result of the economic downturn, more and more Americans are becoming reliant on Title X family planning centers for their health needs.

Title X serves over five million low-income women and men at more than 4,500 health centers each year. Title X services help women and men plan the number and timing of their pregnancies, thereby helping to prevent nearly one million unintended pregnancies each year. In addition to providing contraceptive services and supplies, Title X health centers provide basic preventive health services, education and counseling. For example, in 2008, Title X centers provided over 2.2 million Pap tests and over 2.3 million clinical breast exams.¹ Not only do the services provided through Title X promote public health, they also save tax dollars. For every public dollar invested in Title X, \$4.02 is saved in Medicaid-related costs alone.²

In spite of the program’s critical role and proven effectiveness, funding for Title X continues to fall well short of what is needed. In a 2009 review of the program, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) concluded, “Funding for the program has periodically grown in actual dollars, but has not kept pace with inflation, increased costs of contraceptives, supplies, and diagnostics; greater numbers of people seeking services; increased costs of salaries and benefits; growing infrastructure expenses; or rising insurance costs.” This has resulted in

¹ *Family Planning Annual Report 2008 National Summary* Office of Family Planning, Office of Population Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, November 2009.

² Frost JJ, Finer LB, and Tapales A, “The Impact of Publicly Funded Family Planning Clinic Services on Unintended Pregnancies and Government Cost Savings” *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, Volume 19, Issue 3, August 2008.

“Title X providers feel[ing] pressure to offer more and more comprehensive family planning services and comply with new program priorities without additional resources,” thereby creating tension between fully meeting the needs of current patients and providing more limited services to a greater number.

Though we understand that some Members of Congress would like to limit the use of these resources to provide increased funding only for programs that address chronic disease, the Prevention and Public Health Fund gives the Secretary broad authority in FY 2010 to provide funding for public health programs authorized by the Public Health Service Act, including the Title X family planning program. While the Family Planning Coalition understands the need for increased resources to prevent chronic disease, we urge you to use the Public Health and Prevention Fund as a source of critically needed funding for the range of Public Health Service Act programs, including the Title X program, that routinely assist in the nation’s public health and prevention efforts.

Again, thank you for your leadership on health care reform and your support and dedication to low-income access to family planning. We hope you will consider allocating funds from the Public Health and Prevention Fund for the critically important family planning services provided through Title X. We look forward to working with you to effectively implement health reform policies that will improve the health outcomes for the millions of women and men who rely on publicly funded family planning services.

Sincerely,

[List in Formation]

American Medical Women’s Association
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN)
National Coalition of STD Directors
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health
Unitarian Universalist Association