



NAPAWF ~ ON THE HILL

Federal Government Survives Budget Battles... For Now

With federal employees counting down the seconds, the President, Senate leaders, and House leaders were able to strike a last-minute compromise to fund the federal government through the remainder of fiscal year 2011. Although Republicans in the House attempted to argue that the budget cuts will create jobs, most experts agree that the short-term impact of these cuts will result in more layoffs. Still, after eight temporary measures to reach compromise, the political brinkmanship finally came to an end on Friday, April 8th just a few hours before a federal government shut-down would have happened. The result? The largest annual spending cut in the nation's history with a record \$38.5 billion dollars eliminated, primarily from programs that provide necessary services and support for low-income households. Next up? The fiscal year 2012 budget and impending need to increase the federal debt limit. Awesome.

Budget Breaks on the Backs of Women

Let's break it down a little further... Since taking office, the new majority in the 112th Congress has been relentless in attacks on women's health. First, they introduced a slew of anti-women bills which to impose unnecessary barriers to accessing reproductive health care services which would have a disproportionate impact on API women, other women of color, and low income women. Most recently, they played chicken with a federal government shut-down to balance the budget on the backs of women and girls. The FY2011 budget compromise resulted in prohibiting the District of Columbia from using its own local tax revenues to fund abortion services for low income women. In addition, anti-choice legislators in the House attempted to strong-arm Senate leaders and the President to

cut family planning funds to Planned Parenthood. As many of you may know, Planned Parenthood was most recently the target of an “undercover video sting operation” by the anti-abortion group Live Action. During negotiations on the FY11 continuing resolution, the President and Senate leaders were able to prevent the House from eliminating funds to the Title X program. As a compromise, Congress agreed to hold a separate vote on the Pence Amendment to prohibit Planned Parenthood from receiving federal funds was not included in the final continuing resolution package. The vote passed the House but was defeated in the Senate. While that’s a relief, it’s important to note that Planned Parenthood health centers are often the only accessible provider for uninsured and underinsured women who cannot afford to seek care at other providers. Playing chicken with women’s health is reprehensible. See [NAPAWF’s statement on Title X funding](#).

2012 Budget Battle Looms Ahead

Without missing a beat, the budget battle now moves on to the FY2012 budget process and looming need to raise the nation’s debt ceiling. The President’s FY2012 budget request includes a freeze on discretionary spending and cuts to more than 200 programs but continues to support reproductive health, family planning programs, and funding for the Affordable Care Act. This is a radically different vision than the Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI) 2012 budget resolution that has been introduced and passed in the House. The Ryan budget resolution would eliminate or reduce funding for preventive health care services, maternal and child health and nutrition programs, Head Start and child care, Pell Grants, job training, and services for the elderly. What’s infuriating is that the savings achieved by gutting these programs is less than half the total in tax breaks that House Republican leaders demanded last year for wealthy Americans. Can we start talking about this new reality in which we subsidize the wealthiest 1% of Americans on the backs of the poorest 50% of Americans? Still... just to make sure that no one thinks they’re getting soft, 23 Republicans sent a letter to President Obama threatening to vote against a debt ceiling increase unless he led a bipartisan effort to limit the growth of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. The federal debt ceiling, now set at \$14.3 trillion, is expected to be reached by the end of May. Failure to increase it would mean the federal government would not be able to pay its obligations, including spending on government programs and payments owed to bondholders, potentially leading to weakened world confidence in the US economy and downgrading of government bonds and higher interest payments.

When Economics Is Our Friend

It is clear that the anti-immigrant camp uses the fear of demographic changes (ie. “invading aliens!!!!”), crime (“illegal aliens!!!!”), and now, the Great Recession (“job stealers!!”) to incite the masses against immigrant communities. The only catch is: the facts, and nothing but the facts, demonstrate that these fears are simply overblown. Case in point, the March 10th hearing by the House Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement: while leading restrictionists railed about immigrants stealing jobs from native-born workers, their incoherence merely laid bare their desire to restrict immigration, regardless of status or level of education. However, once the more rational and fact-based testimony began, it was made clear that immigrants have not been taking away jobs, and that the economic recovery is now offering more widespread job opportunities for both native-born and foreign-born workers. What’s more, the hearing concluded by noting the economic contributions of employed immigrants ~ by adding to the supply of labor, immigrants consume goods and services that create more jobs in the local economy, spurring the economic growth so many of our communities desperately need. Now, if only these realities would finally lead to these bull-headed anti-immigrant stalwarts to stop playing politics and get down to finding solutions that benefit immigrant families and our economy!

Affordable Care Act Anniversary Report

March 23, 2011 marked the one-year anniversary of passage of the Affordable Care Act. Unfortunately, large percentages of Americans continue to oppose the law, have inadequate information or understanding of the law, and generally don’t know what to make of the political hot potato that health care has become. Of course, not missing an opportunity to sow more confusion and misinformation, Conservatives continue to play off these fears to push a political agenda that includes defunding and undermining the law. Don’t become one of the misled ~ if YOU are confused about the law, please visit the [new NAPAWF webpage](#) that includes factsheets on the benefits of the law and other important information.

NAPAWF ~ IN THE ADMINISTRATION

Nail Salon Advocacy Gets a Win!

Earlier this week the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) released a [National Hazard Alert](#) to warn consumers and workers about the high levels of formaldehyde found in popular hair straightening solution, Brazilian Blowout. In a pre-release call, OSHA officials commended the [National Healthy Nail Salon Alliance](#) (Alliance) members for all their work to raise awareness of this issue with the agency and to encourage worker's to submit the complaints that led to over 100 OSHA investigations nation-wide! NAPAWF is proud to be a lead co-convenor of the Alliance along with the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative and Women's Voices for the Earth. In addition, the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI) continue to be a strong ally in the effort to push for federal regulatory reforms and initiatives to improve the health and safety of nail salon workers, many of whom are API immigrants and women. WHIAAPI staff were instrumental in coordinating the Alliance's February 10th meeting with the White House Council on Women and Girls, are leading the planning efforts for an upcoming interagency Working Meeting with officials from key federal agencies, and have initiated an innovative effort to create a smartphone application that can detect toxins in nail salons. With friends like these, who needs more?! Thank you WHIAAPI staff!

NAPAWF ~ IN THE STATES

Say It Loud: States Reject Anti-Immigrant Measures!

The state push-back on anti-immigrant legislation keeps gaining momentum, offering a bright spot in the otherwise vitriol landscape of anti-labor and anti-woman legislation barreling through state legislatures. As previously noted, the harsh anti-immigrant legislation being proposed in the states finally woke the business community, which has lumbered to the table with immigrant rights groups to loudly protest the harmful, short-

sighted, and shoot-your-economy-in-the-foot-before-it-can-recover stupidity of trying to remove hundreds of thousands of workers from local economies. Bowing to reason, state legislators are listening. Legislators in Colorado, Iowa, Kentucky, Nebraska, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Mississippi, Virginia, Wyoming, Arizona, and most recently, Kansas have rejected restrictive enforcement legislation due to prohibitive costs and community pushback. Seriously folks, it's a basic economic fact that you can't uproot entire communities of workers, consumers, and taxpayers without wrecking a state's economy in the process.

Enforcement-Only Policies and Immigrant Women

Just how harmful are the immigration enforcement policies being debated in state capitols? Reproductive justice organizations such as NAPAWF, continue to raise awareness about the harmful impact that immigration enforcement programs such as 287(g) and Secure Communities, have on immigrant women and their communities. Secure Communities is a federal program that is meant to find and deport illegal immigrants found guilty of serious crimes by partnering with local police departments to share the fingerprints of individuals arrested with the Department of Homeland Security. Unfortunately, even though a significant of those arrested nationwide had no criminal record, the federal agency plans to take the program nationwide by 2013, with or without local approval to do so. In fact, recent revelations from Freedom of Information Act requests reveal that ICE initially reassured local officials that Secure Communities was a voluntary program but when jurisdictions such as San Francisco and Chicago resisted, ICE declared the program to be mandatory and initiated campaigns to force these communities to join the program. Reports from communities with these types of enforcement programs show they increase insecurity and fear within immigrant communities, leading to a decrease in safety. These policies have a disproportionate impact on women, as they resist contacting law enforcement for fear that either they or the perpetrator may be detained and deported. Even law enforcement officials feel that enforcing federal immigration laws interfere with their ability to prevent crime and keep neighborhoods safe. The deterioration in relationships between immigrant communities and advocates and the police highlight these tensions. In some instances, advocates are no longer telling women to contact the police in instances of domestic violence; instead urging them to seek help elsewhere. Given these concerns, it is important that local communities and advocates continue to speak out against these draconian policies that merely make our

communities less safe and put more women in harm's way. NAPAWF is working with other community leaders to raise awareness of these concerns.

Infant Invasion: The Fear of Brown Babies

A recent report from the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), written by an individual using a pseudonym, "Birthright Citizenship for the Children of Visitors: A National Security Problem in the Making?" raises the specter of women coming to the US to give birth to US citizens before spiriting them back to a home-country to be raised as a future terrorist able to waltz into the US and wreak havoc on our very way of life...!!! Unfortunately, this spectacular sci-fi plot was picked up by a series of news outlets that ran an over-sensationalized story of a luxury townhome that had been converted into a temporary maternity ward for... maternity tourists!! These women, upper- and middle-income Chinese mothers who had paid \$35,000 to have their babies born in the US, have now become the face of the "terror baby" fear. Never mind that their goal is to give their children a better life by increasing their opportunities for higher education and employment, the news stories attempted to paint these women, their luxury digs, and incentives with the same criminalizing, foreign, and nefarious brush that dehumanize all immigrant women and their families. Through its work with the National Coalition of Immigrant Women's Rights, NAPAWF is pushing back against this hateful rhetoric by bringing together experts from various social justice movements to call attention to the concerns impacting immigrant communities, and gathering the true stories of immigrant mothers who have sacrificed and given so much for their children to have a better future in a world that far too often, tries to silence our voices. Check out the [video](#) from the recent [14th Amendment roundtable discussion](#) held by the National Coalition for Immigrant Women's Rights on this issue!

Health Care In the States

As much as political posturing is happening in Washington, the real focus is on how the states will enable health care access for millions of Americans. Right now, states are deciding how they will implement competitive insurance marketplaces, or exchanges. Progressive states are using this opportunity to implement effective exchanges that incorporate human rights values to increase affordable, quality health insurance options. For example, Vermont is in the process of implementing universal health care. However, some states with conservative leadership are using the state exchange implementation process as another venue to restrict

access to reproductive health care services for women or cut back on access to health programs. Meanwhile, other states are still fighting implementation of the law by pushing interstate compacts to move responsibility and authority for the regulation of health care from the federal government to the states. While this creates havoc locally, ultimately this may work out for health care advocates as these states may ultimately be forced to adopt a federally run exchange, which may offer more comprehensive health benefits than what would have otherwise been provided. Still, local communities must remain vigilant to prevent further erosion of women's reproductive rights! Visit NAPAWF to find out more about [state exchanges](#) and their impact on your health care access!

NAPAWF ~ IN THE COURTS

On the Art of Patience: Goodwin Gets the Nod

On April 7th, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to recommend Goodwin Liu for a federal judgeship to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Court. Liu was first nominated more than a year ago but the full Senate failed to vote on his nomination before the conclusion of the 111th Congress. The seat that Liu would fill is considered a "judicial emergency" and the American Bar Association has rated Liu as "Well Qualified", the highest rating available. Yet, despite the urgent need to fill this judgeship and Liu's high qualifications, conservatives in the Senate have continued to oppose and filibuster the vote to confirm Liu. Asian and Pacific Islander community leaders urge the full Senate to vote to confirm Liu immediately!

DOJ to FL: Ruling on Health Care Law is Indefensible!

The Obama Administration has responded to the Florida judge who severely over-reached in a January 31st ruling that the Affordable Care Act's individual insurance mandate was unconstitutional, and therefore that

the entire law had to be revoked. The Department of Justice (DOJ) filed its appeal to the 11th US Circuit Court of Appeals on April 1st, lambasting Judge Vinson's decision. The DOJ first pointed out Judge Vinson's overreach by noting that the Supreme Court has repeatedly held that "when confronting a constitutional flaw in a statute," courts must "try to limit the solution to the problem, severing any problematic portions while leaving the remainder intact." Secondly, the DOJ then rejected the Judge's erroneous conclusion that the decision not to buy health insurance was an attempt by the government to regulate inactivity by noting that the cost of treating the uninsured (estimated at \$43 Billion in 2008) impacts interstate commerce, is not inactivity, and imposes costs on others in the health care market. So take that, Judge Vinson! Oral arguments in the appeal suit will begin June 8th. In response to these court shenanigans, NAPAWF has joined on an amicus brief with other leading health advocates and organizations to oppose these political attempts to overturn the Affordable Care Act and defend the law as an important gain for recognizing health care as a human right and gain for women's health needs.

So Ruled! Arizona Denied Again

In a gavel pound heard around the country, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld a preliminary injunction against the key provisions of Arizona's SB 1070. The three-judge panel found that a federal judge did not abuse her discretion in blocking key provisions of the law, instead, the court correctly recognized that Arizona's misguided anti-immigrant stance interferes with the federal government's exclusive authority to enforce immigration law. The decision is a victory for the Obama administration, which had filed a lawsuit challenging the Arizona law in court. NAPAWF had signed on to the amicus brief in support of the Administration's position.