



## Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 7, 2017

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### **House Republicans Propose Plan to Leave Millions Without Access to Health Care**

*Safety Net Health Care Coverage Undercut by Proposal to Eliminate Planned Parenthood from the Medicaid Program*

**Washington, D.C.** – Last night, House Republicans released their repeal of the Affordable Care Act that includes a provision to specifically block people with Medicaid coverage from accessing preventive health care at Planned Parenthood health centers, including birth control, cancer screenings, and STD testing and treatment. No Medicaid dollars can be used for abortion services.

If passed, this legislation would devastate essential health care access among the country's and state's most vulnerable populations. In Wisconsin alone, Planned Parenthood serves 50,000 patients who are Medicaid eligible, either because they are uninsured or underinsured.

This proposal would have a disproportionate impact on those who already lack access to health care such as people of color, people who live in rural areas, or people with low incomes. Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin (PPWI) is the largest safety net family planning provider in Wisconsin and the only family planning provider serving the Medicaid population in 50% of the counties where PPWI is located. [More than 70 percent of counties](#) Planned Parenthood serves in Wisconsin have a shortage of health care providers. Simply put, Planned Parenthood cares for patients that nobody else will. There are not other health care providers that can absorb Planned Parenthood's patients.

Last week, nine Wisconsin Planned Parenthood patients and supporters joined 150 others from across the country in Washington, D.C. to [share their personal stories](#) and urge their lawmakers to listen to their constituents, who [overwhelmingly support continued access to Planned Parenthood](#).

**Nicole Safar, Government Relations Director for Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin issued the following statement:**

“When patients walk through our doors at Planned Parenthood, the last thing on their minds is politics. They come to us for high quality, affordable health care delivered by compassionate, non-judgmental providers. They are worried about their health, their families and their future. This bill, under Speaker Paul Ryan's leadership, is being fast tracked to pass before the April recess so Congress doesn't have to [answer to its voters](#) for devastating the health care safety net. Ensuring access to lifesaving health care is something we should we should all be able to agree on. Voters do not support this. Without Planned Parenthood, many Medicaid patients will have no other provider to turn to, putting them at risk for undiagnosed cancers, STDs, unintended pregnancy and other poor health outcomes.

“For patients in over half of the communities where PPWI is located, the reality is that there are no ready alternative providers to fill the gap that would be left without PPWI, and Speaker Ryan has continually failed to explain any plan to make sure the 50,000 Medicaid eligible Wisconsinites who depend on Planned Parenthood for essential health care maintain access to the services they need to stay healthy. Our

patients deserve better than this from our Congress. At Planned Parenthood, we will continue to fight this proposal and ensure that each of our patients has access to the care they need.”

### **The Facts on ‘Defunding’ Planned Parenthood:**

- **FACT:** The term “defunding” Planned Parenthood is a [misnomer](#). There is no blank check that Planned Parenthood gets from the federal government, and it’s not a line item in the budget. Instead, this type of legislation would prevent millions of women who rely on Medicaid or other federal programs from accessing the health care provider they’ve been able to rely on for decades. Federal law already blocks federal funds from going to abortion services. Defunding Planned Parenthood instead blocks people from accessing cancer screenings, birth control, HIV and STI testing, and other preventive and essential care.
- **FACT:** Planned Parenthood is Wisconsin’s largest safety net health care provider. At least 86% of patients at Planned Parenthood qualify for Medicaid coverage
- **FACT:** Blocking access to Planned Parenthood hurts people in communities who are struggling to get by the most – especially those with low incomes and those living in areas with no other quality health care providers. Communities of color, immigrant communities, rural areas, young people, and the LGBTQ community, who already face structural barriers to accessing health care, are [disproportionately](#) impacted.
  - Three-fourths of Planned Parenthood health centers are in rural or underserved areas, and 46% of PPWI’s patients are people of color, who already face disproportionate barriers in accessing health
  - Without Planned Parenthood, most of the state’s most vulnerable patients will have no other health care provider to turn to, putting them at risk for undiagnosed cancers, STDs, HIV, unintended pregnancy and other poor health outcomes.
- **FACT:** Fifty percent of the counties PPWI serves will have no alternative provider to turn to if PPWI closes. Other providers cannot just absorb Planned Parenthood’s patient base if it is cut off from federal programs. Politicians who want to defund Planned Parenthood often insist that other providers will fill the gap, but the experts at the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the National Partnership for Women & Families [said flat out: they can’t](#). Even the executive director of the American Public Health Association has called such claims [“ludicrous.”](#)
- **FACT:** [Fifty-four percent](#) of Planned Parenthood health centers are in health professional shortage areas, rural or medically underserved areas. Planned Parenthood health centers provide primary and preventive health care to many who otherwise would have nowhere to turn for care.

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*Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin is the advocacy arm of Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin. PPAWI engages in legislative and educational activity and works to elect candidates to office that support these goals.*