

April 26, 2017

US Senate
US House of Representatives

Dear Member of Congress,

As national, state and local, faith-based and religious groups representing millions of people of faith across the United States, we stand with Planned Parenthood to ensure women's health access and protect moral autonomy for all.

Our organizations share a faith-centered commitment to the marginalized and most vulnerable of our society, including those with limited financial means or those who live in areas with limited access to healthcare. We are deeply disturbed by the latest efforts to defund Planned Parenthood. These attacks on a trusted health provider ultimately hurt the millions of women and families that Planned Parenthood serves.

A world without Planned Parenthood would be disastrous for women and their families—particularly young women, women of color and women in rural areas. For many of these women, Planned Parenthood is their first, and often, only source of medical care. Planned Parenthood health centers are on the frontlines helping women and men, especially those who face economic hardship, to prevent unintended pregnancies. They touch the lives of millions with services, programs and information that foster health and safety. Planned Parenthood supports prevention and treatment efforts for HIV and other STDs, offers life-saving cancer screenings, shares medically accurate information about sexual health and provides quality medical services. Their practice embodies the highest of standards of medical and ethical care.

As people of diverse faith traditions, we understand the myriad beliefs and moral complexity that exist on issues of reproductive health—abortion in particular. Yet it is exactly because of this plurality of beliefs that we respect the right of all Americans to make these decisions privately and freely and that is why we call on you to protect access to the services that Planned Parenthood provides. It is a travesty of justice to single out a specific health service that is both legal and sought by so many women. And it is wrong to vilify organizations like Planned Parenthood that women rely upon to obtain critical reproductive health services. Defunding Planned Parenthood would single out women who have fewer resources and limit their ability to exercise their God-given conscience.

We are disappointed that Congress appears determined to ignore the needs of women and undermine the provision of critical services provided by Planned Parenthood. The Senate can stop this reckless assault and safeguard the health and safety of America's most vulnerable communities.

Our organizations respect women's moral agency and are committed to the social good. We value compassion and feel obligated to protect women's health and wellbeing. We value real religious liberty, which upholds the right of each person to make their own faith-informed or conscience-based healthcare decisions. As groups representing millions of people of faith, including those who receive healthcare at local Planned Parenthood centers, we affirm our support for the incredible and necessary work of this organization. We are distressed by the vindictive and short-sighted attacks on Planned Parenthood that will only harm women and families seeking critical healthcare.

As organizations of faith, we stand with Planned Parenthood.

As members of Congress committed to supporting the wellbeing of your constituents, we urge you to do the same.

Sincerely,

A Critical Mass: Women Celebrating Eucharist
Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns
of the Presbyterian Church USA
Anti-Defamation League
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
California National Council of Jewish Women
California Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Call To Action USA
Catholics for Choice
Central Conference of American Rabbis
Chicago Women-Church (IL)
Colorado Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Concerned Clergy for Choice (New York State)
Connecticut Coalition for Reason
Connecticut Religious Coalition for Reproductive
Choice
Connecticut Valley Atheists
CORPUS
Detroit (MI) Section, National Council of
Jewish Women
Dignity/Washington (DC)
DignityUSA
Episcopal Women's Caucus
Essex County (NJ) Section, National Council of Jewish
Women
Florida Interfaith Coalition for Reproductive Health
Florida National Council of Jewish Women
Global Justice Institute
Greater Cincinnati Women-Church (OH)
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization
of America, Inc.
Hindu American Foundation
Indiana Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Integrity USA
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jewish Women International
Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Keshet
Methodist Federation for Social Action
Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC)
Michigan Conference United Church of Christ
Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network
Minnesota Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Muslims for Progressive Values
National Coalition of American Nuns (NCAN)
National Council of Jewish Women
New Ways Ministry
Ohio Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Oklahoma Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Presbyterian Feminist Agenda Network
Presbyterians Affirming Reproductive Options
Quixote Center/Catholics Speak Out
Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and Jewish
Reconstructionist Communities
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
Religious Institute
Reproductive Justice Committee of the Unitarian
Society of Ridgewood (NJ)
Society for Humanistic Judaism
Southeastern Pennsylvania Women's Ordination
Conference
Three Wise Guys Talking Faith Radio Show (FL)
Unitarian Universalist Association
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry
of New Jersey
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
Women of Reform Judaism
Women-Church Convergence
Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual
(WATER)
Women's Ordination Conference

For more information on this letter or the list of signatories, please contact Sara Hutchinson Ratcliffe, domestic program director, Catholics for Choice at 202-986-0693 or shratcliffe@catholicsforchoice.org