



1724 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20009
 202-234-5570
 202-232-8134 FAX
 www.hartresearch.com

TO: Interested Parties
 FROM: Geoff Garin
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 RE: Public Opposition to Defunding Planned Parenthood

Polling we conducted this week among a representative national cross section of registered voters shows there is broad opposition within the electorate to proposals to end funding for Planned Parenthood.

Fully 64% of registered voters say they **oppose** proposals to end all funding for Planned Parenthood and ban Planned Parenthood from participating in government-funded health care programs, including nearly half (46%) who strongly oppose these proposals. Just 28% of voters favor these proposals.¹

Democratic voters are largely unified in opposing the de-funding of Planned Parenthood (86% oppose), but there are deep divisions within segments of the Republican electorate on this matter:

	Favor %	Oppose %
All Republicans	50	42
Republicans who favor the Tea Party ²	63	33
Other Republicans	27	59
Republican men	57	34
Republican women	41	52

Significantly, Independent voters oppose the cutoff of funding to Planned Parenthood by a margin of more than 2 to 1 – with 64% opposed and only 29% in favor.

¹ Half the respondents were asked: “There is a proposal to ban Planned Parenthood from participating in any government-funded health care programs. Do you favor or oppose this proposal to ban Planned Parenthood from participating in any government-funded health care programs?” The other half of the respondents were ask: “There is a proposal to **end** all government funding for Planned Parenthood. Do you favor or oppose this proposal to end all government funding for Planned Parenthood?” The two different versions of the question produced no meaning difference in outcomes.

² Slightly more than one third of all Republicans do not have a favorable opinion of the Tea Party.

The Republicans' drive to de-fund Planned Parenthood puts the G.O.P. at odds with the vast majority of voters under the age of 30 – 81% of whom oppose ending funding for Planned Parenthood. Similarly, 79% of women under the age of 40 oppose the de-funding effort, as do 69% of suburban women. The Republican Party dug a deep hole for itself in previous elections with these constituencies by focusing on a backward-looking social agenda, and it appears to be doing so again with its war on Planned Parenthood.

Opposition to de-funding Planned Parenthood is rooted partly in the fact that Planned Parenthood is a well-regarded organization among Americans. Fifty-five percent of voters express positive feelings toward Planned Parenthood, more than twice the number who express negative feelings toward it (25%). Voters are significantly more likely to view Planned Parenthood as playing an important role in reducing unintended pregnancies and as one of the few affordable health care options for many women than they are to see it as an organization with “pro-abortion agenda.”

Indeed, Planned Parenthood is far more widely respected within the electorate than the groups that are leading the effort to de-fund Planned Parenthood. For example, voters have a negative impression of Republicans in Congress today by 41% to 33% -- meaning that Planned Parenthood's positive rating is 22 percentage points higher than that of the Republicans in Congress. Thirty-seven percent of voters express negative feelings toward the Tea Party Movement, compared to 35% who have a positive feeling toward it.

When asked about reasons to oppose the effort to de-fund Planned Parenthood, over 60% of voters say that each of following three reasons are either very convincing or fairly convincing to them:

- ✓ More than ninety percent of Planned Parenthood's work involves preventive services that help women, families, and communities stay healthy. These services include life-saving cancer screenings, breast health care, prenatal services, well-woman exams, contraceptive services, and prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.
- ✓ Especially during this current economic recession with unemployment and the number of uninsured Americans rising, more women are turning to Planned Parenthood health centers for trusted, high-quality affordable health care. If Planned Parenthood centers are forced to close, many of these women would have no other affordable option.
- ✓ Planned Parenthood plays an important role in reducing the number of unintended pregnancies and the need for abortion by providing access to education, information, and affordable contraception.

The interviews for this survey were conducted by telephone between April 4 and April 7, 2011, among a representative national cross section of 1,002 registered voters. The partisan composition of the sample is 38% Democrat, 34% Republican, 17% completely independent, and 11% other/not sure.