

Discriminating Against Planned Parenthood Patients & Blocking Access to Health Care During a Pandemic

[HB 2010](#) - Budget for the Dept. of Health and Senior Services

[HB 2011](#) - Budget for the Dept. of Social Services

In the midst of a global pandemic, lawmakers should be expanding access to health care. Instead, they're attacking Planned Parenthood at the expense of patients who need vital preventive care.

Missouri is in a public health emergency because of the coronavirus pandemic, but some lawmakers are still playing political games and attacking Planned Parenthood at the expense of patients who need health care.

- Lawmakers are once again using the budget to try and block patients who rely on publicly funded health programs from accessing birth control, cancer screenings, and STI testing and treatment at any health center affiliated with an abortion provider – and Planned Parenthood is their biggest target.

Planned Parenthood is a crucial component of Missouri's health care safety net, providing patients high-quality care that is both accessible and comprehensive.

- Despite budget bills that have discriminated against patients' choice of providers, Planned Parenthood has continued to provide preventive care for patients.
- All 11 Planned Parenthood health centers in Missouri offer Pap tests and the full range of birth control options, including long-acting reversible contraception (LARCs).

Let's be clear: This is about access to birth control, cancer screenings, and STI testing and treatment. Not abortion.

- Current law *already* bars this family planning funding from going to abortion – but politicians are so obsessed with abortion that they cut access to preventive care anyway.
- Preventive care reduces unintended pregnancies and keeps Missourians healthy and safe.

On top of the pandemic, Missouri has a statewide syphilis outbreak and rising rates of maternal mortality – this is the time to *expand* access to care, not block patients from Planned Parenthood.

- The number of early syphilis cases in Missouri has increased 218% since 2012.
- The state of Missouri has recognized this public health threat. When it came time to find providers to treat this outbreak, *they came to Planned Parenthood*. Planned Parenthood has answered the call, ramping up testing for syphilis and providing treatment for patients.
- Missouri's maternal mortality rate is increasing, and parts of the state have infant mortality rates higher than those in developing countries. Restricting access to family planning and women's health care providers, including Planned Parenthood, will only make things worse.

Blocking patients' access to Planned Parenthood does nothing to improve Missourians' health – in fact, it will only make things worse.