

## Discrimination Against Women Seeking Services at Family Planning Centers Fact Sheet

SB 259 Sen. Wallingford (R-27, Cape Girardeau) | HB 427 Rep. Swan (R-Cape Girardeau)

The bill could prohibit women seeking services at health centers that specialize in family planning services from receiving publicly funded care. This would include health centers that primarily provide services related to women's reproductive health, including family planning centers, and could also include private OB/GYNs. The bill creates a flawed scheme of how state and federal family planning funds are allocated, allowing patients at hospitals and other primary health care providers to get publicly funded care while those choosing to get care at popular family planning providers such as Planned Parenthood would be denied publicly funded care. This could also prevent patients at health centers from receiving other types of federal or state funded services, such as treatment and prevention for sexually transmitted infections or cancer screenings and counseling.

We know that women who come to Planned Parenthood aren't making a political statement; they are coming to get basic health care, like breast exams, pap tests, and birth control. The intention of the bill is to prevent women seeking care at family planning health centers from accessing public funds for their care. The bill represents yet another attempt to take health care away from women and families who need it – for purely political reasons. Politics should not interfere with women's access to breast exams, birth control, pap tests, or prenatal care, but that's exactly what would happen if this bill became law.

Instead of arguing about which provider is a priority, let's make Missouri women a priority and fund the health care they need. 392,870 women in Missouri were in need of publicly supported contraceptive services and supplies. Contraceptive services provided in Missouri helped women avoid 21,800 unintended pregnancies, which would have resulted in 10,800 births and 7,400 abortions. For every \$1.00 spent on family planning services saves over \$7.00 in tax funded health care. (Guttmacher Institute, 2012)

For many low income women in America, Planned Parenthood is their primary source of all health care. No matter what their economic status, women should have access to essential health care services. Planned Parenthood ensures that all women, men, and teens have access to reproductive health care services and education, regardless of income. We partner with both local and federal governments to fill the gap through which thousands of Missourians would fall without our support.

Planned Parenthood works every day to keep women healthy. Planned Parenthood affiliates in Missouri serve thousands of women, men, and teens annually for preventive health services, including life-saving cancer screenings, birth control, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, pap tests, comprehensive sex education, and reproductive health information at 13 health center locations throughout the state.