

“Defunding” Care at Planned Parenthood

[HB 2010](#) and [HB 2011](#) - [Rep. Fitzpatrick](#) (R-158, Shell Knob)

This budget proposal would deny patients access to birth control, cancer screenings, and sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing by “defunding” care at Planned Parenthood health centers.

Politicians are attempting to use [HB 2010](#) and [HB 2011](#) – the budgets for the Dept. of Health and Senior Services and the Dept. of Social Services – to cut patients’ access to preventive care, like birth control and sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment for patients insured through MO HealthNet (Missouri’s Medicaid program) and the state-funded Women’s Health Services Program.

These bills could leave Missouri patients without access to scores of family planning and women’s health care providers – including Planned Parenthood health centers.

- By using a ridiculously broad definition of “abortion services” that includes referral, HBs 2010 and 2011 may cut access to health care at providers throughout the state.

Planned Parenthood and other family planning and women’s health care providers care for thousands of patients every year.

- In Missouri, Planned Parenthood provides more than 7,000 Medicaid patients annually with preventive care like birth control, cancer screenings, annual exams, and STI testing and treatment.

Rep. Ross’ amendment to HB 2011 violates federal Medicaid law.

- Federal law ensures patients covered by Medicaid have the right to see “any willing provider” of their choice.

Without access to family planning and women’s health care providers – including Planned Parenthood health centers – many patients will have nowhere to go for care.

- Planned Parenthood is a critical part of the safety net, working together with other providers like federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and community health centers.
- If MO HealthNet patients can no longer choose Planned Parenthood as their provider, the remaining health centers will not be able to absorb them. “Federally qualified health centers simply don’t have the resources to offer the kind of drop-in care that’s Planned Parenthood’s specialty.” (Dr. Abbe Sudvarg, *St. Louis Public Radio*, March 24, 2016)
- Rural and low-income communities *already* face a provider shortage – excluding providers will only make things worse.

Instead of making it more difficult for Missourians to access vital health care, the Legislature should focus on measures to improve Missourians’ health.

- Missouri’s maternal mortality rate is increasing, and parts of the state have shockingly high rates of infant mortality. Restricting access to family planning and women’s health care providers, including Planned Parenthood, will only make things worse.