

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
1233 Longworth House Building Office  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
233 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

May 10, 2017

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, House Speaker Ryan, and House Minority Leader Pelosi,

We the undersigned Mayors lead over 100 cities across the United States, representing big cities as well as rural areas and more than 30 million Americans. We write on behalf of these communities and families, and strongly oppose any legislation to “defund” and shut down Planned Parenthood health centers. Defunding Planned Parenthood would have a devastating effect, preventing millions of people with Medicaid coverage from accessing basic health care including birth control and cancer screenings at Planned Parenthood health centers.

Planned Parenthood is one of the largest providers dedicated exclusively to reproductive health care services in the United States. An estimated 1 in 5 women in this country will rely on Planned Parenthood in her lifetime. Planned Parenthood provides comprehensive family planning, cervical and breast cancer screenings, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and annual well women care. Nearly 2.5 million women, men and young people relied on Planned Parenthood in 2014, nearly half of whom are people of color. In 2014 Planned Parenthood’s doctors and nurses carried out more than 600,000 lifesaving screenings for cervical cancer and breast exams, and its health centers also provided contraception to nearly 2 million patients and more than 4 million tests and treatments for STIs, including HIV tests. Because of the role Planned Parenthood plays in communities across the country, and because of the role they have played in the lives of millions of Americans, people overwhelmingly support Planned Parenthood and strongly oppose defunding efforts<sup>1</sup>.

Defunding Planned Parenthood would have serious consequences and an extraordinarily harmful impact on communities in our cities and across the nation. The reality is that if this blatant attack on health care access is passed by Congress, people will lose access to care

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<sup>1</sup> Planned Parenthood Action Fund, *Public Overwhelmingly Supports Planned Parenthood* (Jan. 2017), available at [https://www.istandwithpp.org/uploads/filer\\_public/69/b3/69b3e379-aa9d-406a-bda1-d6747f9ea627/20170403-fact-public-overwhelmingly-supports-planned-parenthood.pdf](https://www.istandwithpp.org/uploads/filer_public/69/b3/69b3e379-aa9d-406a-bda1-d6747f9ea627/20170403-fact-public-overwhelmingly-supports-planned-parenthood.pdf) (citing the results of 20 national polls).

because there are simply not enough health care providers to meet the need. In fact, despite false assertions, public health experts have resoundly said that community health centers could not absorb the flood of patients defunding Planned Parenthood would cause.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, more than half of all Planned Parenthood health centers are located in rural or underserved patient communities, which means they are in communities that have been identified by the federal government as having an insufficient number of federal providers. In our communities, Planned Parenthood and other providers work together to ensure patients' needs are met. That is why mayors are standing in support of health care access for women, and urging the 115th Congress to reject proposals that would deny preventive care to millions of Americans.

No one knows better than mayors how devastating it would be to take away health care and preventive services from this many people. If all Medicaid patients are prohibited from seeking care at Planned Parenthood health centers, it would be an attack on the well-being and economic security of those who already face barriers to accessing health care and need it most.<sup>3</sup> People go to Planned Parenthood because they know they will find health care professionals who are compassionate experts dedicated to reproductive and preventive health care. We know our communities, and we know they rely on the trusted care of Planned Parenthood. For Medicaid recipients to lose this essential part of their health care would be nothing short of disastrous.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ethan Berkowitz, City of Anchorage, AK

Mayor Coral J. Evans, City of Flagstaff, AZ

Mayor Greg Stanton, City of Phoenix, AZ

Mayor Mark W. Mitchell, City of Tempe, AZ

Mayor Anna Tovar, City of Tolleson, AZ

Mayor Jonathan Rothschild, City of Tucson, AZ

Mayor Elizabeth Patterson, City of Benicia, CA

Mayor Mary Casillas Salas, City of Chula Vista, CA

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<sup>2</sup> Sara Rosenbaum, "Planned Parenthood, Community Health Centers, And Women's Health: Getting The Facts Right," *Health Affairs* (Sept. 2015) available at <http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2015/09/02/planned-parenthood-community-health-centers-and-womens-health-getting-the-facts-right/>.

<sup>3</sup> The Atlantic, "The Economic Case for Funding Planned Parenthood" (September 2015), available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/09/planned-parenthood-economic-benefits/405922/>.

Mayor Catherine S. Blakespear, City of Encinitas, CA

Mayor Robert Garcia, City of Long Beach, CA

Mayor Eric Garcetti, City of Los Angeles, CA

Mayor Jill Techel, City of Napa, CA

Mayor Libby Schaaf, City of Oakland, CA

Mayor Michael M. Vargas, City of Perris, CA

Mayor Tom Butt, City of Richmond, CA

Mayor Darrell Steinberg, City of Sacramento, CA

Mayor Edwin M. Lee, City of San Francisco, CA

Mayor Heidi Harmon, City of San Luis Obispo, CA

Mayor Helene Schneider, City of Santa Barbara, CA

Mayor Rachel Hundley, City of Sonoma, CA

Mayor Michael Tubbs, City of Stockton, CA

Mayor Muriel Bowser, City of Washington, DC

Mayor Buddy Dyer, City of Orlando, FL

Mayor Marcie Tinsley, City of Palm Beach Gardens, FL

Mayor Rick Kriseman, City of St. Petersburg, FL

Mayor Bob Buckhorn, City of Tampa, FL

Mayor Jeri Muoio, City of West Palm Beach, FL

Mayor Kirk Caldwell, City of Honolulu, HI

Mayor Nancy Rotering, City of Highland Park, IL

Mayor Pete Buttigieg, City of South Bend, IN

Mayor Leslie Soden, City of Lawrence, KS

Mayor Martin J. Walsh, City of Boston, MA

Mayor Alex B. Morse, City of Holyoke, MA

Mayor Joseph M. Petty, City of Worcester, MA

Mayor Catherine Pugh, City of Baltimore, MD

Mayor Ethan K. Strimling, City of Portland, ME

Mayor Christopher Taylor, City of Ann Arbor, MI

Mayor David Coulter, City of Ferndale, MI

Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell, City of Kalamazoo, MI

Mayor Virg Bernero, City of Lansing, MI

Mayor Kurt R. Metzger, City of Pleasant Ridge, MI

Mayor Kenson J. Siver, City of Southfield, MI

Mayor Jim Carruthers, City of Traverse City, MI

Mayor Amanda Maria Edmonds, City of Ypsilanti, MI

Mayor Emily Larson, City of Duluth, MN

Mayor Betsy Hodges, City of Minneapolis, MN

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman, City of Saint Paul, MN

Mayor Sly James, Jr., City of Kansas City, MO

Mayor Francis Slay, City of St. Louis, MO

Mayor Pam Hemminger, City of Chapel Hill, NC

Mayor Jennifer Watson Roberts, City of Charlotte, NC

Mayor Adrian O. Mapp, City of Plainfield, NJ

Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman, City of Las Vegas, NV

Mayor Hillary Schieve, City of Reno, NV

Mayor Kathy M. Sheehan, City of Albany, NY

Mayor Ellen Polimeni, City of Canandaigua, NY

Mayor Paul Feiner, City of Greenburgh, NY

Mayor Peter Swiderski, City of Hastings-on-Hudson, NY

Mayor Tiffany Martin Hamilton, City of Hudson, NY

Mayor Svante L. Myrick, City of Ithaca, NY

Mayor Steven T. Noble, City of Kingston, NY

Mayor Noam Bramson, City of New Rochelle, NY

Mayor Bill de Blasio, City of New York, NY

Mayor Lovely A. Warren, City of Rochester, NY

Mayor Ken Wray, City of Sleepy Hollow, NY

Mayor Stephanie A. Miner, City of Syracuse, NY

Mayor Drew Fixell, City of Tarrytown, NY

Mayor Thomas M. Roach, City of White Plains, NY

Mayor Mike Spano, City of Yonkers, NY

Mayor John Cranley, City of Cincinnati, OH

Mayor Andrew J. Ginther, City of Columbus, OH

Mayor Nan Whaley, City of Dayton, OH

Mayor Warren Copeland, City of Springfield, OH

Mayor John Stromberg, City of Ashland, OR

Mayor Jeffrey D Gowing, City of Cottage Grove, OR

Mayor Lucy Vinis, Formerly Kitty Piercy, City of Eugene, OR

Mayor Gary H. Wheeler, City of Medford, OR

Mayor Mark Gamba, City of Milwaukie, OR

Mayor Ted Wheeler, City of Portland, OR

Mayor Jeanne Sorg, City of Ambler, PA

Mayor John K. Fetterman, City of Braddock, PA

Mayor Timothy A. Scott, City of Carlisle, PA

Mayor Josh Maxwell, City of Downingtown, PA

Mayor Ron Strouse, City of Doylestown, PA

Mayor Sal Panto, Jr., City of Easton, PA

Mayor Eric Papenfuse, City of Harrisburg, PA

Mayor Norman Hawkes, City of Hatboro, PA

Mayor Ed Foley, City of Jenkintown, PA

Mayor J. Richard Gray, City of Lancaster, PA

Mayor Thomas Kramer, City of Millbourne, PA

Mayor Jim Kenney, City of Philadelphia, PA

Mayor Bill Peduto, City of Pittsburgh, PA

Mayor Tarah D. Probst, City of Stroudsburg Borough, PA

Mayor Kelley Kelley, City of Turtle Creek , PA

Mayor Carolyn Comitta, City of West Chester, PA

Mayor C. Kim Bracey, City of York, PA

Mayor Jorge O. Elorza, City of Providence, RI

Mayor Megan Barry, City of Nashville, TN

Mayor Steve Adler, City of Austin, TX

Mayor Michael S. Rawlings, City of Dallas, TX

Mayor Sylvester Turner, City of Houston, TX

Mayor Levar M. Stoney, City of Richmond, VA

Mayor Miro Weinberger, City of Burlington, VT

Mayor Edward B. Murray, City of Seattle, WA

Mayor Marilyn Strickland, City of Tacoma , WA

Mayor Timothy D. Leavitt, City of Vancouver, WA

Mayor Tom Barrett, City of Milwaukee, WI