

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 18, 2014

The Honorable Shaun Donovan  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th St., NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Donovan:

We respectfully request that you support domestic and international family planning in the President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Request by providing \$1 billion for international family planning and reproductive health, including \$65 million for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and \$327 million for the Title X domestic family planning program. We strongly urge this Administration to maintain the commitment it has demonstrated to cost-effective programs which build health systems that meet the need of women and young people across America and in the developing world.

Despite wide spread public support for contraception and significant advances toward making it broadly accessible, such as contraceptive coverage being covered at no cost to women as a preventive service under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), domestic and international family planning funds have faced systematic attacks within the House of Representatives in the past several years. Bills have been introduced that would dismantle the ACA's contraceptive benefit, eliminate the Title X family planning program, bar Planned Parenthood from providing vital preventative health care to millions of women and men, reinstate the global gag rule, and eliminate funding for UNFPA. Many of these ideologically-driven attempts have been made through appropriations bills. We appreciate the Administration's leadership in support of family planning and ask that you continue to protect these crucial programs by including them at increased levels in the FY 2016 Budget Request.

Title X is the only federally funded program in the United States dedicated to family planning for low-income and uninsured women, men and young people. Since 1970, Title X has been a key component of our nation's health care infrastructure and an essential element in the winning strategy to reduce unintended pregnancies. In fact, 6 in 10 women who access care from a family planning health center consider it their main source of health care.<sup>1</sup> Every year, nearly 5 million individuals rely on Title X health centers to provide essential life-saving and preventative care, including cancer screenings, sexually transmitted infections (STI) tests, and HIV tests. In 2012 alone, Title X health centers provided 1.2 million Pap tests, 1.8 million breast exams, and over five million tests for sexually transmitted

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<sup>1</sup> Gold, RB et al., *Next Steps for America's Family Planning Program: Leveraging the Potential of Medicaid and Title X in an Evolving Health Care System*, Guttmacher Institute, 2009.

infections (STIs), including 1.2 million HIV tests.<sup>2</sup> In addition, contraceptive services provided at Title X clinics allow families to plan for their futures, helping to prevent more than one million unintended pregnancies each year.<sup>3</sup> Not only does Title X help save women's lives, it is also cost-effective; for every dollar invested in publically funded family planning programs, tax payers save more than \$7.00 in Medicaid related costs. Furthermore, Title X is fundamental to the successful implementation of the ACA. Title X providers will fill in gaps in the delivery system, increasing women's access to health care services where there are few providers. For example, after Massachusetts enacted health care reform, Title X family planning health centers continued to have high volumes of patients, both insured and uninsured, and remained providers of choice for many.<sup>4</sup>

Today, at least 222 million women in the developing world would like to prevent or delay pregnancy but lack access to modern methods of contraception, despite two decades of international consensus on individuals' right to make their own decisions about when and how often to have children. Our request for the international family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH) program represents the U.S. fair share of the investment necessary to address the existing unmet need for safe, effective contraception. This cost-effective investment continues to position the U.S. as a global leader on family planning and reproductive health and saves and improves the lives and health of women, youth, and children.

The funding appropriated for the U.S. assistance for international family planning and reproductive health programs for FY 2014 made it possible for:

- 31 million women and couples to receive contraceptive services and supplies;
- 7 million unintended pregnancies to be averted;
- 3 million induced abortions to be averted (2 million of them unsafe);
- 13,000 maternal deaths to be averted; and
- 60,000 fewer children to lose their mothers.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, we strongly support a robust contribution to UNFPA, the world's principal multilateral provider of family planning and reproductive health services. UNFPA plays a critical role in combating maternal mortality and morbidity, obstetric fistula, female genital mutilation, gender-based violence, and HIV/AIDS, and providing voluntary family planning services and contraceptive supplies in low-income countries, often in countries where USAID does not operate FP/RH programs. They have also taken a lead role in responding to reproductive and community health needs in humanitarian crises and conflict areas, including Syria, Afghanistan, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Inside Syria, UNFPA is the

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<sup>2</sup> Fowler, CI, Gable, J, Wang, J, and McClure, E. (November 2013). Family Planning Annual Report: 2012 National Summary. Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International

<sup>3</sup>Frost JJ, Zolna MR and Frohwirth L, Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2012 Update, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2014, <<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/win/contraceptive-needs-2012.pdf>>.

<sup>4</sup> Marion Carter et. al., Trends in Uninsured Clients Visiting Health Centers Funded by the Title X Family Planning Program —Massachusetts, 2005–2012 (US Government Printing Office: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, January 24, 2014), <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6303.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Guttmacher Institute. "Just the Numbers: The Impact of U.S. International Family Planning Assistance" (June 2014). [http://www.guttmacher.org/media/resources/just\\_the\\_numbers\\_2014.pdf](http://www.guttmacher.org/media/resources/just_the_numbers_2014.pdf)

only agency distributing reproductive health vouchers and is the only provider of normal childbirth delivery services in Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. In Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where women are being turned away from health facilities that are overstretched due the Ebola crisis, UNFPA has recruited midwives, launched mobile clinics, and is providing critical supplies for safe prenatal, childbirth, and antenatal care.

Together, USAID's family planning and reproductive health program and UNFPA are vital to deliver on the Administration's two signature global health goals: ending preventable child and maternal deaths and achieving an AIDS-free generation, as well as the President's commitment to promoting gender equality in U.S. foreign policy.

For the health and human rights of all Americans and women around the world, we firmly support domestic and international family planning programs and urge you to provide these increases in the President's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Request. We appreciate your attention to this matter.

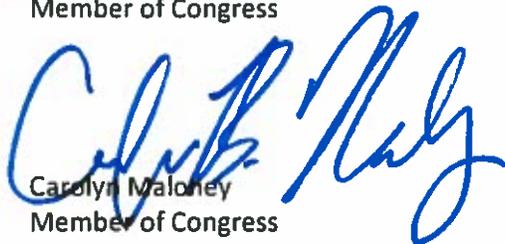
Sincerely,



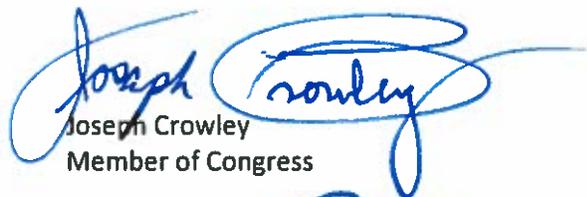
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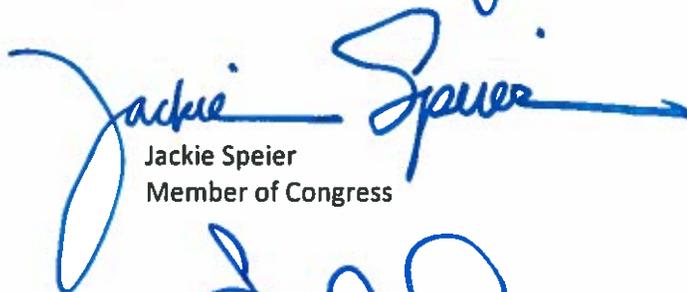
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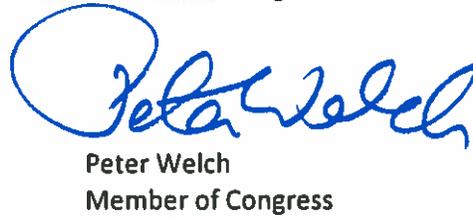
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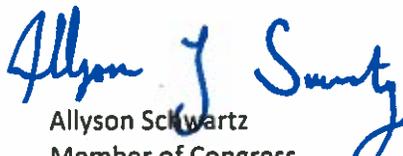
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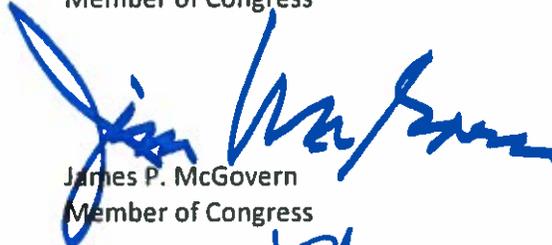
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