



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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BPCLC Releases Open Letter to President Trump Opposing Proposed Changes to Title X Family Planning Grant Program Requirements

LIZ KRUEGER June 25, 2018

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Albany – Members of the Bipartisan Pro-Choice Legislative Caucus (BPCLC) released today an open letter to President Trump, declaring that his administration’s Title X proposed rule would have dangerous implications for the healthcare system, the doctor-patient

relationship, and women's health and well-being. The BPCLC asserts that the proposed rule would violate patient rights, serve as a "gag rule", and have negative impacts on maternal morbidity and mortality, as well as unintended pregnancy rates. The full text of the letter can be read below, and is also available [here](#).

Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "We cannot sit idly by as the Trump Administration and its supporters chip away at our basic rights and health care protections. New York State must step up and lead, and that is what the Bipartisan Pro-Choice Legislative Caucus is doing. I am proud to join my colleagues in urging President Trump to backtrack his plan to deny essential funds to women's health care facilities. Regardless of what happens in Washington, we must be ready to protect women's rights in New York and serve as an example to the nation during these difficult times."

"This is yet another example of the Trump administration seeking to attack women's reproductive rights, which is unacceptable," said Senator Liz Krueger. "The Title X proposed rule would severely limit access to safe, legal abortion for women with low incomes and who are underinsured, even though it is their legal right to have an abortion. I oppose government involving itself in women's reproductive healthcare decisions, which should be between a woman, her family, and her doctor. I also find the potential impacts alarming – many thousands of New Yorkers could find themselves without access to contraception, comprehensive counseling, and quality reproductive health care. This proposed rule is unnecessary and unethical, and we will not stand for it."

"As a long time legislator, teacher, mother and WOMAN, I strongly oppose the Title X proposed rule which seeks to deny Title X funding to healthcare facilities that provide abortion services and referrals. New York State is a proud, progressive State with a long history of standing up for the rights of its citizens including the guarantee that all women

have access to quality family planning and healthcare. The road to Title X funding has been long and hard won; we cannot now allow this administration to erase that progress. The loss of support for the services provided by the Title X funding will jeopardize the wellbeing of women all over this country and is unacceptable and punitive as it will most adversely affect women already at risk.” said Assemblywoman Jaffee.

On June 1st, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services issued proposed changes to Title X Family Planning Grant Program requirements. This Trump administration proposed rule would prohibit recipients of Title X funding, including Planned Parenthood and other reproductive health clinics, from performing abortions, or providing abortion referrals. Furthermore, this “domestic gag rule” stipulates that Title X recipients shall “provide a broad range of acceptable and effective family planning methods...”, including methods that are not evidence-based, nor that have been proven effective. Last year in New York State, more than 306,00 individuals, 83% of whom had incomes at or below 250% of the federal poverty level, relied on Title X facilities to receive needed health care services such as: pelvic exams; STD screening; screening for cervical and breast cancer; contraceptive counseling; screening for diabetes, anemia, and high blood pressure; HIV screening; and fertility services. Many Title X facilities also provide safe, legal abortions to women with low incomes or who are without adequate health insurance; however, in compliance with the Hyde Amendment, these facilities do not use federal funding to cover the cost of abortion services. The Trump administration claims that this proposed rule is necessary to ensure compliance, but it is clear that what the administration seeks is to defund Title X facilities that provide abortion, Planned Parenthood in particular.

The New York State Bipartisan Pro-Choice Legislative Caucus (BPCLC) was established in 2010, and includes members of both the State Senate and Assembly. The mission of the BPCLC is to protect reproductive rights across the state, and provide a voice for pro-choice

state legislators in policy debates at both the state and national level. Specifically, the BPCLC works to protect access to quality reproductive health services, remove barriers to these services, ensure access to education about reproductive choices, and respond to any potential infringements to the legal right to reproductive healthcare in New York State.

BACKGROUND:

-The Title X Family Planning Program in New York:

<https://www.nationalfamilyplanning.org/file/impact-maps-2017/NY.pdf>

-Planned Parenthood Action Fund's overview of the Title X proposed rule:

https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/blog/what-is-the-domestic-gag-rule?utm_source=ppact&utm_medium=tw&utm_campaign=actiontw&utm_content=gag0613

- State Innovation Exchange open letter from State legislators:

https://stateinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/RFLC_Open_Letter_Gag_Rule.pdf

- Proposed Rule Text: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/06/01/2018-11673/compliance-with-statutory-program-integrity-requirements>