

PUBLIC LETTER OF SUPPORT

August 14, 2015

Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal announced on August 3, 2015 that the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals was cancelling Planned Parenthood's Medicaid contract in 30 days. This decision is driven by political motives and not based on the facts.

We have a health care crisis in Louisiana. Louisiana has some of the highest rates of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis. New Orleans and Baton Rouge alternate between the No. 2 and No. 3 ranking for new cases of HIV. In our state, the teen birth rate and teen pregnancy rates are soaring while the numbers are decreasing nationwide. Additionally, Louisiana has some of the highest rates of cervical cancer and cervical cancer deaths in the United States.

Over the past several years, funding to the State Office of Public Health has been drastically cut. Reducing the number of clinics and family planning related services provided to women in Louisiana has resulted in a public health crisis. Women in Louisiana rank among the lowest in country for health care outcomes. We need Planned Parenthood as part of the safety net for preventive health care.

We join together to stand up to the destructive strategies of Governor Jindal and his efforts to reduce access to health care for working and low income people. Defunding Planned Parenthood would jeopardize basic, preventive health care such as lifesaving cancer screenings, contraception and family planning, STI testing and treatment, well-woman exams, and community sexual health education programs.

Planned Parenthood is a trusted quality preventive health care provider in Louisiana which serves nearly 10,000 women and men each year. Planned Parenthood is a Medicaid provider in good standing and was audited by the Department of Health and Hospitals and the Legislative Auditor last year. Planned Parenthood stands on their record of quality health care.

We the undersigned organizations are working hard every day to improve the quality of life for those in Louisiana. Our professional fields range from health care to health care access; human rights, reproductive justice to voting rights and

workers' rights to criminal justice. We know that the women, men and families of Louisiana deserve access to health care from the provider of their choosing. We stand with Planned Parenthood.

We stand with Planned Parenthood during this time of vicious political attack against women and access to reproductive health care. At a time when Governor Jindal is systematically dismantling the public health system, Planned Parenthood is part of the safety net for the men and women in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. It's outrageous that politicians are using this widely discredited attack against Planned Parenthood to deny thousands of Louisiana women and men access to healthcare.

Do not defund Planned Parenthood. We stand with Planned Parenthood and support access to preventive health care.

Sincerely,

Baton Rouge AIDS Society
Baton Rouge Organizing
Brotherhood, Inc.
Equality Louisiana
Face to Face Enrichment Center
Heals the Hurt, Inc.
Independent Women's Organization (IWO)
League of Women Voters Of Louisiana
League of Women Voters of New Orleans
Louisiana Coalition for Reproductive Freedom
Louisiana Progress Action
Louisiana Trans Advocates
National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Greater New Orleans, Inc.
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater New Orleans Section
NOW Shreveport-Bossier
Slut Walk New Orleans
The BlackOut
Unite Women of Louisiana