

REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: June 27, 2018

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst Council File No: 18-0002-S84
Assignment No: 18-06-0615

SUBJECT: Women's health care.

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached revised resolution to include in the City's 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Program OPPOSITION to the Trump Administration's proposed rule changes to Title X, and any legislation and/or administrative changes that are dangerous to women and intentionally attack reproductive and women's health care.

SUMMARY

A Resolution (Martinez – Rodriguez) was introduced on June 26, 2018 urging the United States Department of Health and Human Services to reevaluate any proposed rules that would negatively impact women's health care, including a proposed change to Title X of the Public Health Service Act.

The federal government provides grants for family planning services through the Family Planning Program, Title X of the Public Health Service Act. Enacted in 1970, it is the only domestic federal program devoted solely to family planning and related preventive health services. In 2015, Title X funded clinics that served 4.0 million clients. Although the authorization of appropriations for Title X ended with FY1985, funding for the program has continued through appropriations bills for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies.

The Trump Administration has proposed changes to Title X that would negatively impact many Family Planning Programs in California and across the United States. Additionally, the Trump Administration has taken action to reduce the availability of family planning in countries receiving aid from the United States.

The Resolution recommends opposition to proposed rule changes to Title X from the Department of Health and Human Services, along with any other legislation and/or administrative changes that are dangerous to women and intentionally attack reproductive and women's health care.

BACKGROUND

The Trump Administration has proposed and enacted a series of rule changes that restrict women's access to health services and family planning nationally and globally.

In May 2018, the Office of Population Affairs, in the Department of Health and Human Services, proposed a set of rule changes that would prohibit the use of Title X-funded programs from performing, promoting, referring for, or supporting abortion as a method of family planning.

The Resolution notes that Title X provides low-income patients with lifesaving screenings, birth control, and other essential services. These services have led to a 30-year low of unintended pregnancy and the lowest teen pregnancy rates in U.S. history. Californians make up over 25 percent of Title X recipients nationwide, including over one million low-income patients. Title X services have provided a net savings of \$64,000,000 in California annually.

In January 2017, President Trump issued a Presidential Memorandum reinstating the Mexico City Policy, also known as the Global Gag Rule. The Global Gag Rule states that foreign NGOs that receive United States global health assistance shall not perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in foreign countries or provide financial support to any other foreign non-governmental organization that conducts such activities.

According to California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, roughly half of California's 700,000 pregnancies each year are unintended. Restricting the availability of Title X services will render women unable to take the appropriate steps for their family planning. Additionally, the current rates of sexually transmitted diseases, such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis, are at public health crisis proportions in California, and the loss of Title X services would only increase these rates.



Tristan Noack
Analyst

SMT:tn

Attachment: Resolution

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles, with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the Title X Family Planning Program was enacted under President Richard Nixon in 1970 as part of the Public Health Service Act and is the only federal grant program dedicated solely to provide individuals with comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services; and

WHEREAS, Title X has been the nation's family planning program for one-half century, providing low-income patients critical lifesaving screenings, birth control, and other essential services; and

WHEREAS, Title X services have led to a 30-year low of unintended pregnancy and the lowest teen pregnancy rates in history; and

WHEREAS, Title X is a fiscally responsible program, providing a net savings of \$64,000,000 in California annually, and 75 percent of Americans support continuing it; and

WHEREAS, in May 2018, the Trump Administration's proposed a set of rule changes that state that providers may not perform promote, refer for, or support abortion as a method of family planning, nor take any other affirmative action to assist a patient to secure an abortion; and

WHEREAS, this is a dangerous departure from the successful Title X program with new regulations that will create a "domestic gag rule" and new barriers for low-income women to access essential health services; and

WHEREAS, California law mandates that a physician provide informed consent of all medically safe options to their patients, but the Title X rule change proposed by the federal administration would "gag" physicians from having candid conversations with their patients, potentially putting the health and well-being of women at risk; and

WHEREAS, California patients make up 25 percent of Title X recipients nationwide, including over one million low-income patients, through Planned Parenthood and other Title X providers; and

WHEREAS, the current rates of sexually transmitted diseases, such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis, are of public health crisis proportions in California, and the loss of Title X services would only increase these rates; and

WHEREAS, the proposed new Title X rule is designed to decimate a woman's right to have autonomy over her body, as established 45 years ago in Roe v. Wade, and create barriers to

abortion services by limiting medically accurate health care information despite the longstanding prohibition of using federal funds, including Title X funds for abortion; and

WHEREAS, history has taught us and data has proven, from pre-Roe v. Wade America to the current targeted regulation of abortion providers (TRAP) laws of Texas and other states, to the Mexico City Policy, also known as the Global Gag Rule, that limiting information about or access to abortion increases dangerous "back-alley" abortions that put women's lives at risk;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes into its 2017-2018 Federal Legislative Program OPPOSITION to the Trump Administration's proposed rule changes to Title X, and any legislation and/or administrative changes that are dangerous to women and intentionally attack reproductive and women's health care.