



PRESS RELEASE

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Washington State Legislature Prevents 19 Family Planning Clinic Closures Statewide, Keeps the Safety Net Intact

Olympia, WA – In a move that will keep clinic doors open, prevent thousands of unintended pregnancies and save the state millions of dollars in health care costs, the 2010 Legislative Session adjourned on Tuesday with a victory for reproductive health priorities and women and families across Washington State.

“The protection of family planning services in this budget means that low-income women across the state for whom an unintended pregnancy could be a personal and financial catastrophe can keep the access to birth control they have today. It also means clinics can keep their doors open and Washington will spend the smarter, much smaller dollar amount that family planning costs instead of increasing our spending on unintended pregnancy care even further than the over \$333 million we spent in 2008,” said Jennifer Allen, Director of Public Policy for Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington.

“We believe legislators showed real courage in raising additional revenue to protect core safety net services,” said Elaine Rose, CEO of Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington. “Passing the revenue package needed to support this budget was not an easy vote to take, but it was fiscally responsible, and the right thing to do to protect the health and safety of women and families in Washington State.”

Planned Parenthood also applauds the legislature for protecting other vital programs. Maternity Support Services were not cut any further, mammogram services for low-income women were protected, the Basic Health Program was not cut any further, and the Apple Health insurance program for low-income kids was largely preserved.

In support of raising sufficient new revenue to protect family planning and other safety net services, Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington activists made over 62,000 phone calls into key legislative districts, turned out in support of reproductive health to 12 Town Halls across the state, and made over 20,000 contacts to legislators.

While reproductive health advocates are certainly counting this as a victory, bringing funding back to this level is still insufficient. Access to the Medicaid family planning program in our state is almost 50% below the levels of 2005, when thousands more low-income Washingtonians could get the family planning services they needed. The Guttmacher Institute estimated that nearly 400,000 Washington women were in need of publicly funded contraceptive services in 2006, but in 2007, less than half that number were able to access family planning services according to the Department of Health.

Family planning services are even more critical to individuals and our state during times of economic hardship. Family planning saves money: for every dollar it invests, Washington State saves \$4.39 in immediate pregnancy care costs, according to the Guttmacher Institute. Reproductive health care not only supports healthy families by allowing people to plan their pregnancies, it keeps state Medicaid, pregnancy care, and other costs down.

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[Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington](#) (PPVW) is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization educating Washingtonians and policy-makers about reproductive health issues. PPVW lobbies and educates to advance Planned Parenthood's mission and also engages in limited electoral activities.