

FALL 2011 GET connected

Here We Go...AGAIN

This fall leaders in the House of Representatives released an appropriations package that would yet AGAIN put politics over women's health by reviving proposals to cut preventive care for women. These same proposals were rejected by the Senate in April. They would prohibit Planned Parenthood from providing primary and preventive care through public health programs; eliminate funding for the Title X National Family Planning program; and, effectively prohibit insurance coverage of abortion in the new health exchanges under the Affordable Care Act. This was preceded by Rep. Stearns (R-FL), announcing that the House Oversight Committee has started an "investigation" of Planned Parenthood, demanding that Planned Parenthood Federation (PPFA) hand over financial and other records from every Planned Parenthood health center since 1998. PPFA and its affiliates have a strong record of fiscal responsibility and, like other health care providers and nonprofit organizations, we routinely work with government regulators and independent auditors to ensure compliance with all rules and regulations regarding the funding Planned Parenthood health centers receive, whether it is a private contribution or federal or state funding, such as Medicaid reimbursements. PPFA is meeting with the committee and is responding to the request.



Neither one of these actions is about fiscal responsibility. These are efforts to undercut the ability of the largest provider of women's reproductive health services to provide essential care to the women, men, and teens who rely on them. This is about a pattern of politically motivated attacks designed to eliminate Planned Parenthood once and for all. Whether on the federal level or state by state, this year has seen unprecedented attacks and restrictions on the health choices that women and families make every day. **Thank you for standing with Planned Parenthood.** We must continue to stand up and fight against these outrageous attacks and this serious waste of taxpayer dollars!

The New Health Care Environment at Planned Parenthood

The national attack on Planned Parenthood continues to have local implications. We have seen an increase in protestor activity, not only in number, but in the tactics being used. No one knows this better than our army of patient escorts. These courageous volunteers donate hours of time every week to ensure the safety of our patients on days when abortion services take place. Many of our volunteers have been doing this for years. We are lucky to have a Board member who has years of past experience with patient escorting at another Planned Parenthood who has taken on the role of organizing and training new escorts to deal with the increased intimidation of our patients and staff. No longer is it just holding up signs and praying the rosary; it has now escalated to direct intimidation—stopping patients or screaming at them on their way in, setting up a video camera across from the entrance, even phoning staff with death threats. When protestors aren't yelling at patients they are yelling at volunteers who have been trained not to engage with these individuals. While these protestors may look harmless, the words that come out of their mouths are pure hatred; hatred of anyone who walks through our doors, of staff and volunteers and mostly of Planned Parenthood and all that we stand for. Imagine what it must be like to be a patient crossing the sidewalk or parking lot, just trying to do what's right for herself. One patient we spoke with recently stated that, "These people out here don't understand that I come here for basic health care. I'm a part-time college instructor. There's nowhere else for me to go." This is why we're here and will continue to be here for anyone who wants and needs our services. As our volunteer escorts, patients and staff continue to deal with intimidation and harassment, Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley is working hard to raise funds and increase its security measures; hiring a security guard, installing more video surveillance and purchasing bullet proof vests for its physicians. **We're here and we're not going anywhere.**

October is...

Breast Cancer Awareness Month As a leading provider of health care to women, Planned Parenthood knows the importance of regular annual exams, of which clinical breast exams and cancer screenings are a standard part. About 200,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year and 40,000 will die from it. Planned Parenthood also educates all patients about the importance of monthly self-exams, something that could save your life since who knows your body better than YOU.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month Domestic violence results in nearly 100,000 days of hospitalization, 30,000 emergency room visits, and almost 40,000 visits to physicians each year. Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley Education staff stresses the importance of healthy relationships in their work with teens and young adults.

Hispanic Heritage Month Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Planned Parenthood partners with many community-based Latino organizations to help address known health disparities with regard to reproductive health care utilization.

Let's Talk Month Let's Talk Month, which encourages and stresses the importance of parents talking to their kids about sex and sexuality, is in full swing. Planned Parenthood Mid-Hudson Valley's Health Educators and Peers have events planned throughout the community. As the country's largest sex education provider, Planned Parenthood speaks with parents every day about what they can do to keep their kids safe and healthy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Planned Parenthood offers a variety of educational workshops and programs for parents? We have parent/child puberty workshops, parent-child teen workshops and programs for parents and caregivers to help parents talk more effectively and openly with their kids about sexuality and reproductive health. Visit www.ppmhv.org, contact our Education Office at (845) 838-1200, ext. 103 or e-mail us at education@ppmhv.org.

Did you know that Planned Parenthood helps patients get FREE family planning services? Through the Family Planning Benefit Program, patients may be eligible for free annual exams, birth control, emergency contraception (EC), pregnancy tests, pap smears and STI testing and counseling. Our dedicated enrollers help patients sign up for and receive these benefits. Call 1-800-230-PLAN for more information or to make an appointment.

Did you know that Planned Parenthood is ACTIVE? We have recently initiated Activist Councils in Orange and Dutchess Counties. Council members meet regularly to discuss and learn about what's going on with reproductive rights here in NY and across the country in order to become leaders for reproductive justice in their communities. Members also plan events, write letters to the editor, phone bank and much more! For more information, contact our Public Affairs office at publicaffairs@ppmhv.org.

Connect With Us in the Community!

October 25 Poughkeepsie Healthy Teens Task Force, Family Partnership Center
October 25 Professional Adolescent Development Training, Newburgh
October 25 Talking Back & Forth Parent Workshop, Monticello
October 27 Ulster Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Council, Kingston Library
November 1 Healthy Teens Task Force, Planned Parenthood, Beacon
November 1 Orgasm Inc. (movie), OCCC, Middletown
November 1 Insights Fertility Support Group, Vassar Brothers Medical Center
November 2 Orgasm Inc. (movie), OCCC, Newburgh
November 3 Birds & Bees Community Forum, Newburgh
November 5 Birds & Bees Community Forum, Middletown

November 7 Talking Back & Forth Parent Workshop, Thrall Library, Middletown
November 9 LGTBQ Circles Youth Support Group, Kingston
November 15 LGTBQ Circles Youth Support Group, Kingston
November 15 Birds and Bees Community Forum, Liberty
November 17 Birds and Bees Community Forum, Port Jervis
November 19 Live the Dream Girls Empowerment Conference, Poughkeepsie
November 29 Talking Back and Forth Parent Workshop, Monticello
December 1 World AIDS Day HIV Testing @ Dutchess Community College, Ulster County Community College, Orange County Community College (Newburgh & Middletown), Sullivan County Community College

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 **Planned Parenthood**[®]
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