



February 2009

## **From the Desk of John W. Nugent, President & CEO**

In Baltimore City, babies are suffering.

Baltimore's women, particularly African American women, are having low birth weight babies. These children are much more likely to have serious health problems. Worse yet, many babies are not living to see their first birthday because of these issues.

I am pleased to share that Planned Parenthood of Maryland is combating these problems as part of Maryland's new *Babies Born Healthy* project.

This project goes to the heart of who we are and what we believe in. We want women to be as healthy as they can be when, and if, they choose to get pregnant.

**We know that healthier women = healthier babies.**

And we are attacking this problem head-on. We are hitting the streets with a strong public awareness campaign and providing greater health care to women before they become pregnant.

Earlier this month we kicked off our program when 20 dedicated volunteers and staff members delivered *Babies Born Healthy* packages to all 188 state Senators and Delegates.

**But as we work to make local changes, our new Pro-Choice President struggles to make national changes.**

As I attended post election summits to help plan a reproductive justice agenda, it became clear that there are not enough pro-choice votes in Congress to drastically change reproductive health care laws.

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President Obama is limited in what he can do through Executive Orders, and politics is very much the art of compromise. In order to pass health care reform, abortion and family planning services may take a back seat to other health issues.

**It's a very tough time for our patients, as you might imagine.**

Each day, I am struck by the worsening economy as more unemployed and uninsured women come through our doors. These women are often making the very difficult choice to delay parenthood because they cannot afford the costs associated with raising a child.

**With your help, we will reach these women.**

Your support of our mission remains vital to our success. While we rejoice at having an Obama Administration, you are the ones who make sure we will help more women.

**You are Planned Parenthood.**

Nationally recognized as one of the strongest affiliates in the Planned Parenthood Federation, we are poised to work even harder for you and for the health of Maryland's women.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John W. Nugent', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John W. Nugent  
President & CEO

**PS – You can learn more about *Babies Born Healthy* on our website. Just visit: [www.plannedparenthoodmd.org/BabiesBornHealthy](http://www.plannedparenthoodmd.org/BabiesBornHealthy).**

**PPS – Mark your calendars! Our 4<sup>th</sup> annual signature event, *Celebrate Our Right to Shoes* will be held at Baltimore's beautiful Tremont Grand on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. To purchase tickets call (410) 576-2150.**