

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE NOVEMBER 4, 2015

**TESTIMONY HIGHLIGHTS REAL DANGERS OF DEFUNDING EFFORT,
AS OHIOANS SHARE THEIR STORIES OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD**

COLUMBUS—Ohioans gave testimony today against HB 294, the House version of the bill to defund Planned Parenthood.

Individuals from all over the state shared their stories of why Planned Parenthood is important and why taking away the services it provides would be ruinous to our communities. From patients, to staff, to supporters, all brought with them a consistent message: that Planned Parenthood is a vital reproductive health care provider for women and men in Ohio.

Carmen Winant, a Columbus resident, gave the following testimony in support of Planned Parenthood:

“The first time I came into Planned Parenthood I was a scared sixteen year old who did not want to have a child of my own; the second time I was an adult who did. In both cases, I was given fantastic health care, treated with respect, professionalism and dignity by the doctors, nurses and receptionists, and not charged hand over fist for my care. I’m so grateful to this place, which does a service not only for women, but all citizens. Women needn’t feel shame about getting health care and making choices about our bodies: we should celebrate and defend this right.

Kimberly Hardesty a Planned Parenthood Health Educator in Chillicothe spoke about the importance of the educational programs Planned Parenthood provides:

“Dismantling this successful program Planned Parenthood has established is a disservice to my colleagues and the teens we serve. We are experts in the field of sexual and reproductive health. We provide medically accurate information to those whom we teach”