



Missouri Family Health Council, Inc.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 14, 2016

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MFHC to Legislators: Take Politics Out of Our Health Care

Last week the Missouri Senate passed a budget that would prohibit abortion providers, including Planned Parenthood, from receiving Medicaid funding to provide basic health care services such as birth control, pelvic exams, and vaccinations. Further, this budget rejects \$8 million in federal Medicaid funding and instead creates an entirely new state health care program. It is fiscally irresponsible that Missouri is refusing \$8 million in funding just to make a political point. Missouri Family Health Council, Inc. (MFHC) stands strongly opposed to this measure and urges the House to reject this budget amendment.

This maneuver is largely based upon legislation that was implemented in Texas – legislation that had disastrous consequences for the citizens of that state. Research revealed that after the state of Texas blocked Planned Parenthood patients from accessing care through the state’s Women’s Health Program in 2013, it led to a 35% decline in women using the most effective methods of birth control. Consequently, there was a 27% spike in births among women who had previously used injectable contraception, births that were largely paid for by Medicaid¹.

For over 30 years, MFHC has been a proponent of accessible reproductive health care for all Missourians. This bill not only cuts out an integral part of Missouri’s Title X network from receiving state reimbursement, but it places undue barriers on individuals seeking care – barriers that most often affect low income, underserved populations. Missouri should be expanding access to women’s health providers, not making it more difficult; Texas serves as a cautionary tale, not a model to be followed. MFHC strongly encourages the House to take politics out of Missourians’ health care.

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ABOUT MFHC:

Missouri Family Health Council’s mission is to champion access for every individual to culturally sensitive, quality, sexual and reproductive health education and services. Missouri’s diverse Title X network consists of health departments, federally qualified health centers, hospitals, nonprofits, and affiliates of Planned Parenthood. Title X funds are granted to MFHC through the Office of Population Affairs. Please visit www.mfhc.org for more information.

¹ Stevenson, A. J., Flores-Vazquez, I. M., Allgeyer, R. L., Schenkkan, P., & Potter, J. E. (2016, March 3). Effect of removal of Planned Parenthood from the Texas Women’s Health Program. Retrieved April 12, 2016, from <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa1511902>