

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2010

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services,
and Education Subcommittee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
and Education Subcommittee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

As you begin work on the FY 2011 appropriations bills, we respectfully request that funding for the Title X family planning program be increased to \$700 million over the next five years, beginning with an increase of \$76.5 million in FY 2011. We appreciate the President's leadership in providing a nearly \$9.9 million increase for Title X in his FY 2011 Budget Request. However, as the percentage of uninsured women of reproductive age continues to rise as the result of the current economic downturn, more and more Americans are becoming increasingly reliant on Title X family planning clinics for basic health care. In fact, 6 in 10 women who access care from a family planning health center consider it to be their primary source of health care.

Title X serves over five million low-income women and men at more than 4,500 health centers each year. Title X services help women and men plan the number and timing of their pregnancies, thereby helping to prevent nearly one million unintended pregnancies each year, nearly half of which would otherwise end in abortion. In addition to providing contraceptive services and supplies, Title X health centers provide basic preventive health services, education and counseling.

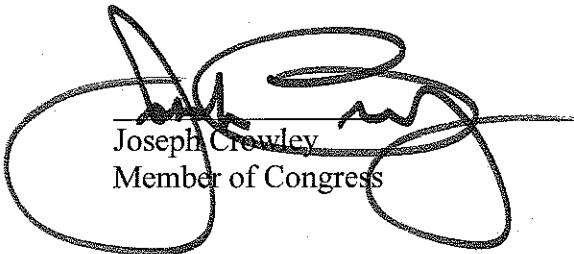
In spite of the program's critical role and proven effectiveness, funding for Title X continues to fall well short of what is needed. Today, millions of women are struggling to afford the contraceptive supplies and gynecologic health services they need. A December 2009 study by the Guttmacher Institute found that at federally-funded family planning health centers, the proportion of patients who are economically disadvantaged is increasing. More than four in five centers reported an increase in clients who were uninsured, and nearly two-thirds of centers reported a decrease in clients who were able to pay the full fee for their services. Nearly one out of four women report having put off a gynecological or birth control visit to save money in the past year. A significant increase in funding for the Title X program is a critical tool in assisting states to reduce unintended pregnancies and meet the reproductive health needs of low-income women.

Title X is a prime example of the type of successful program that should be expanded. An increase of \$76.5 million in FY 2011 would begin to address some of the critical needs facing Title X providers today such as increased cost of contraceptive supplies and diagnostics, increased salaries and benefits, and growing infrastructure expenses.

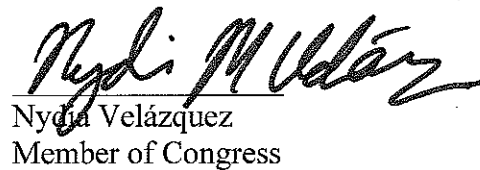
Today, approximately 17.5 million women and men need publicly supported contraceptive care. Even with the passage of a health care reform bill and ideally, the expansion of Medicaid family planning coverage through a state option, the Title X program will remain an essential component of our health care system, as it provides much needed infrastructure support to safety net providers throughout the country. Access to providers, particularly in medically underserved communities, is critical. While Title X is one of the nation's best and most cost-effective public health success stories, without additional funding, Title X-funded health centers will be unable to meet the growing demand for care or continue to provide quality preventive health services.

Now more than ever is the time to make a significant investment in Title X, beginning with an increase of \$76.5 million in FY 2011 and by committing to fund this effective program at \$700 million within the next five years. We look forward to working with you to strengthen America's dedicated family planning program. Please feel free to have your staff contact Nicole Cohen with Representative Joe Crowley at nicole.cohen@mail.house.gov if we can provide any further information about this request.

Sincerely,



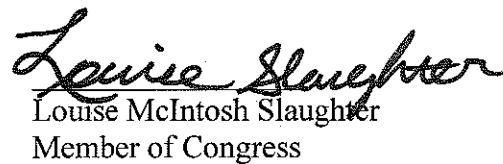
Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



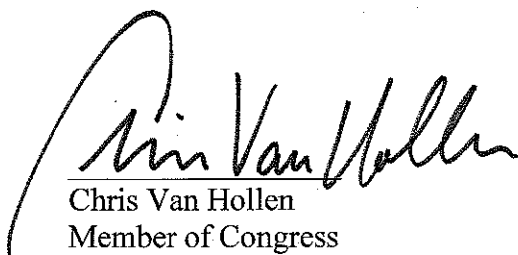
Nydia Velázquez
Member of Congress



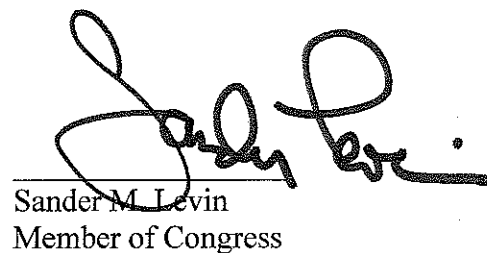
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress




Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Member of Congress




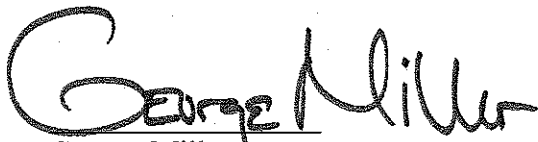
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress

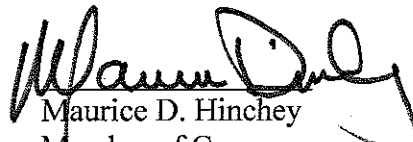



Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress



Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress

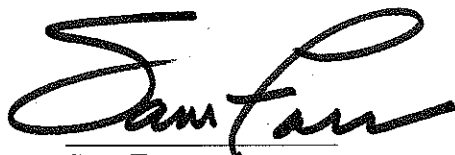

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



George Miller
Member of Congress

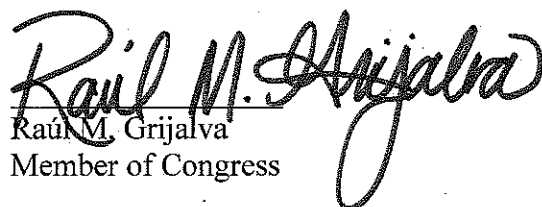

Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress


David Wu
Member of Congress



Mazie K. Hirono
Member of Congress

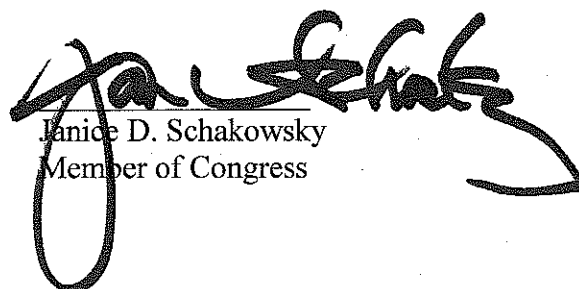

Sam Farr
Member of Congress



Rick Boucher
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Dennis Moore
Member of Congress

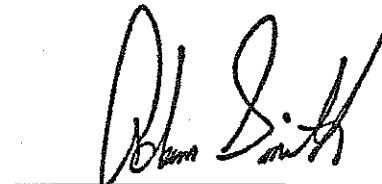

Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress



Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Linda Sánchez
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Paul W. Hodes
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



David Loebsack
Member of Congress

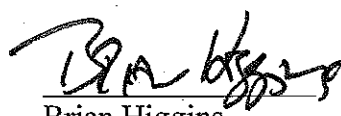

John A. Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress


Peter Welch
Member of Congress


Michael McMahon
Member of Congress


Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress


Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

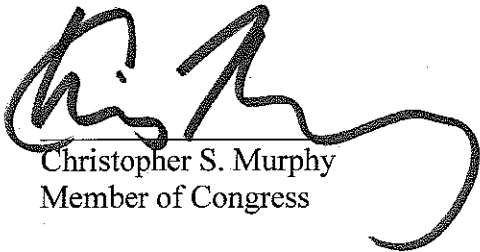

Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress




William L. Owens
Member of Congress



Christopher S. Murphy
Member of Congress



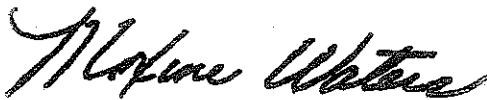
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



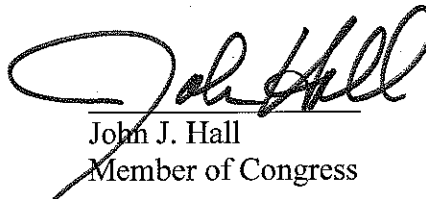
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



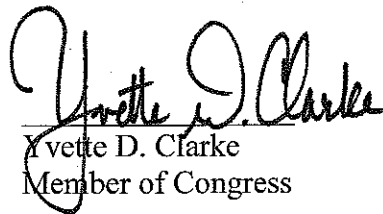
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



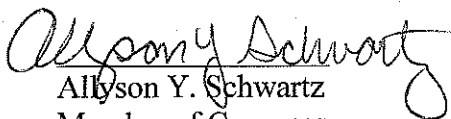
John J. Hall
Member of Congress



Bruce L. Braley
Member of Congress




Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

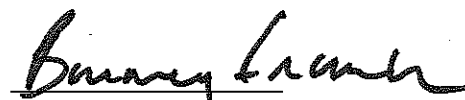



Allyson Y. Schwartz
Member of Congress





Patrick J. Murphy
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress

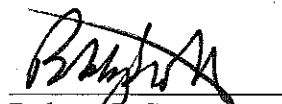

Barney Frank
Member of Congress



Rush D. Holt
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress


Joe Courtney
Member of Congress


Robert C. Scott
Member of Congress


Mike Thompson
Member of Congress


Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress


Michael N. Castle
Member of Congress