

April 16, 2010

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chair
Subcommittee on Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs
Senate Committee on Appropriations
433 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy:

On behalf of our organizations and our constituencies in the United States and around the world, we thank you for your commitment to achieving universal access to voluntary family planning and other reproductive health services and care. Your tireless work to ensure that American foreign policy recognizes the unique needs of women and girls and to guarantee access to desperately needed reproductive health care is key to the progress that has been achieved. We are proud to stand with you now, as we have during the past two decades in debate after debate over the basic rights of women in the poorest parts of the world.

We are writing today to ask for your continued leadership by including language in the FY 2011 State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations bill that would protect the free speech of organizations and enhance the provision of family planning and other reproductive health services by prohibiting the imposition of the dangerous Global Gag Rule on health and family planning providers working overseas.

You are well aware about the harmful effects of the Global Gag Rule on family planning providers and, more importantly, the women who rely on these services. Now is the time to enact legislation that makes clear that no foreign health care provider can be disqualified from U.S. assistance simply because it provides a health care service with its own private funds that is legal both within its own country and here in the United States, or because it engages in political debate about abortion policy within its own country. We encourage you to include it in the appropriations bill this year.

We were deeply gratified when President Obama lifted the policy within a week of assuming office and we are confident that his action is benefiting thousands of women. However, the political ping-pong match of the policy being in effect, then not, then again, then not again and so on, creates even more burden on providers who have to juggle and change their programs to accommodate the political winds, rather than best public health practice. In some ways, it creates an inefficient use of resources ó which is misguided. Indeed, reports from the field suggest there is now reluctance on the part of some U.S.-funded organizations to work with other family planning service providers who were unable to be funded during the Bush administration as a result of the Gag Rule. This reluctance is due to uncertainty as to whether those organizations will be able to continue to participate in a project over its full five-year period or will be forced to drop off the team if the Gag Rule were to be reinstated under a new administration. The concern about partnering with these affected groups will almost certainly intensify as the next election cycle approaches.

For far too long, the health and rights of women and girls in the developing world have been treated by American policymakers as little more than a tool in a domestic political struggle. We look forward to working with you and your staff in the coming weeks and months to support this provision and to ensure its enactment into law. Thank you again for your long record of leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Organizations Based in the United States

ActionAid USA, Washington, DC
Advocates for Youth, Washington, DC
Africa Action, Washington, DC
AIDS Action, Washington, DC
AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), Chicago, IL
American Association of University Women, Washington, DC
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), New York, NY
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Washington, DC
American Humanist Association, Washington, DC
American Jewish World Service, New York, NY
American Medical Women's Association, Philadelphia, PA
Americans for Informed Democracy (AID), Washington, DC
AMREF USA, New York, NY
California Church IMPACT, Sacramento, CA
CARE USA, Atlanta, GA
Catholics for Choice, Washington, DC
Center for Environment and Population (CEP), New Canaan, CT
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Washington, DC
Center for Inquiry, Washington, DC
Center for Reproductive Rights, New York, NY
Center for Women Policy Studies, Washington, DC
Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), New Brunswick, NJ
Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR), Denver, CO
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (CHAMP), New York, NY and Providence, RI
Connecticut Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Old Greenwich, CT
Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, Boston, MA
Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, Washington, DC
EngenderHealth, New York, NY
Family Care International, New York, NY
Feminist Majority, Arlington, VA
Gender Working Group, Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA
Global AIDS Alliance, Washington, DC
Global Forum on MSM & HIV, Los Angeles, CA
Health Global Access Project (Health GAP), New York, NY

Healthy Teen Network, Baltimore, MD
Human Rights Watch, New York, NY
Hunger Project, New York, NY
Ibis Reproductive Health, Cambridge, MA
International Community of Women Living with HIV and AIDS, North American Region
International HIV/AIDS Alliance USA, Washington, DC
International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), New York, NY
Ipas, Chapel Hill, NC
Jewish Women International, Washington, DC
MADRE, New York, NY
Michigan Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, East Lansing, MI
MSI-US, Washington, DC
NARAL Pro-Choice America, Washington, DC
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, Washington, DC
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH), Washington, DC
National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Washington, DC
National Council of Jewish Women, New York, NY
National Council of Women's Organizations, Washington, DC
National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association, Washington, DC
National Health Law Program (NHeLP), Washington, DC
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, New York, NY
National Network of Abortion Funds, Boston, MA
National Organization for Women, Washington, DC
National Partnership for Women & Families, Washington, DC
National Women's Law Center, Washington, DC
National Women's Health Network, Washington, DC
Nevada County Citizens for Choice, Inc, Grass Valley, CA
Ohio Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Columbus, OH
Open Society Policy Center, Washington, DC
Oxfam America, Boston, MA
Partners in Health, Boston, MA
Pathfinder International, Watertown, MA
Physicians for Human Rights, Cambridge, MA
Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health, New York, NY
Planned Parenthood Federation of America, New York, NY
Population Action International (PAI), Washington, DC
Population Connection, Washington, DC
Population Council, New York, NY
Population Institute, Washington, DC
PSI (Population Services International), Washington, DC
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Washington, DC
Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Morgantown, WV
Religious Institute, Westport, CT
Reproductive Health Technologies Project, Washington, DC
Secular Coalition for America, Washington, DC
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS), New York, NY

SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, Atlanta, GA
Treatment Action Group (TAG), New York, NY
U.S. Positive Women's Network, Oakland, CA
Union for Reform Judaism, New York, NY
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, Boston, MA
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, Washington, DC
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church & Society, Washington, DC
WIN (Women's Information Network), Washington, DC
Women Deliver, New York, NY
Women of Reform Judaism, New York, NY
Women Organized to Respond to Life-threatening Disease (WORLD), Oakland, CA
Women Thrive Worldwide, Washington, DC
Women's Refugee Commission, New York, NY

Organizations Based Internationally

Aahung, Pakistan
Afghan Family Guidance Association (AFGA)
Aman Jordanian Association
Amnesty International, United Kingdom
Anguilla Family Planning Association (AFPA)
Antigua Planned Parenthood Association (APPA)
Asociación Chilena de Protección de la Familia (APROFA)
Asociación Civil de Planificación Familiar (PLAFAM), Venezuela
Asociación Demográfica Costarricense (ADC), Costa Rica
Asociación Demográfica Salvadoreña (ADS)
Asociación Dominicana Pro-Bienestar de la Familia PROFAMILIA, Dominican Republic
Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia (ASHONPLAFA)
Asociación Panameña para el Planeamiento de la Familia (APLAFA)
Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana (PROFAMILIA)
Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia de Guatemala (APROFAM)
Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Nicaragüense (Profamilia)
Asociación Puertorriqueña Pro Bienestar de la Familia (PROFAMILIA)
Asociación Uruguaya de Planificación Familiar AUPF, Uruguay
Associação Angolana para o Bem Estar da Família (ANGOBEFA), Angola
Associação Caboverdiana para a Proteção da Família (VERDEFAM), Cape Verde
Associação da Guiné-Bissau Para a Educação e Promoção de Saúde Familiar (AGUIBEF),
Guinea-Bissau
Associação Moçambicana para Desenvolvimento da Família (AMODEFA), Mozambique
Associação Para o Planeamento da Família (APF), Portugal
Association Algérienne pour la Planification Familiale, Algeria
Association Béninoise pour la Promotion de la Famille (ABPF), Benin
Association Burkinabé pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ABBEF), Burkina Faso
Association Burundaise pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ABUBEF), Burundi
Association Centrafricaine pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ACABEF), Central African Republic
Association Comorienne pour le Bien-Etre de la Famille (ASCOBEF), Comoros
Association Congolaise pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ACBEF), Congo

Association Djiboutienne pour l'Equilibre et la Promotion de la Famille, Djibouti
 Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health XY (Association XY), Bosnia and Herzegovina
 Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), Canada
 Association Guadeloupéenne pour le Planning Familial (AGPF)
 Association Guinéenne pour le Bien-Etre Familial (AGBEF), Guinea-Conakry
 Association HERA XXI (HERA XXI), Georgia
 Association Ivoirienne pour le Bien-Etre Familial (AIBEF), Ivory Coast
 Association Libanaise pour une Famille Moderne, Lebanon
 Association Malienne pour la Protection et la Promotion de la Famille (AMPPF), Mali
 Association Marocaine de Planification Familiale, Morocco
 Association Martiniquaise pour l'Information et l'Orientation Familiales (AMIOF)
 Association Mauritanienne pour la Promotion de la Famille Mauritania
 Association Nigérienne pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ANBEF), Niger
 Association pour la Promotion de la Famille Haïtienne (PROFAMIL), Haiti
 Association pour le Bien-Etre Familial/Naissances Désirables (ABEF/ND), Democratic Republic of Congo
 Association Rwandaise pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ARBEF), Rwanda
 Association Sénégalaise pour le Bien-Être Familial (ASBEF), Senegal
 Association Tchadienne pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ASTBEF), Chad
 Association Togolaise pour le Bien-Etre Familial (ATBEF), Togo
 Association Tunisienne de la Santé de la Reproduction, Tunisia
 Bahamas Family Planning Association Bah FPA
 Bahrain Reproductive Health and Family Planning Association
 Balance Promoción para el Desarrollo y Juventud, Mexico
 BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights, Lagos
 Barbados Family Planning Association's (BFPA)
 Belize Family Life Association (BFLA)
 Botswana Family Welfare Association (BOFWA)
 Bulgarian Family Planning and Sexual Health Association (BFPA)
 Cameroon National Association for Family Welfare (CAMNAFAW)
 Canadian Federation for Sexual Health (CFSH)
 Caribbean Family Planning Affiliation Ltd.
 Center for Equality Advancement, Lithuania
 Center for Research and Environment Health and Population Activities (CREHPA), Nepal
 Centro de Investigación, Educación, y Servicios (CIES), Bolivia
 Centro Ecuatoriano para la Promoción y Acción de la Mujer (CEPAM), Ecuador
 Centro Paraguayo de Estudios de Población (CEPEP)
 CFI Transnational
 China Family Planning Association (CFPA)
 Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies (CSBR)
 Cook Islands Family Welfare Association (CIFWA)
 Dominica Planned Parenthood Association (DPPA), Dominica
 Eesti Seksuaaltervise Liit / Estonian Sexual Health Association (ESTL), Estonia
 Egyptian Family Planning Association
 Europe External Policy Advisors (EEPA), Belgium
 Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia (FGAE)

Family Health Options Kenya (FHOK)
 Family Life Association of Swaziland (FLAS)
 Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) (FPAB)
 Family Planning Association of Cyprus (FPAC)
 Family Planning Association of Greece (FPAG)
 Family Planning Association of Hong Kong (FPAHK)
 Family Planning Association of India (FPA India)
 Family Planning Association of Liberia (FPAL)
 Family Planning Association of Malawi (FPAM)
 Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN)
 Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka (FPASL)
 Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago (FPATT)
 Family Planning Organization of the Philippines (FPOP)
 Federación de Planificación Familiar de España (FPFE)
 Fédération Laïque de Centres de Planning Familial, Belgium
 Federation of Family Planning Associations of Malaysia (FFPAM)
 Fianakaviana Sambatra (FISA), Madagascar
 Fondation Suisse pour la Santé Sexuelle et Reproductive (PLANeS), Switzerland
 FOR FAMILY AND HEALTH Pan-Armenian Association (PAFHA), Armenia
 Foundation for the Promotion of Responsible Parenthood (FPRP), Aruba
 Foundation for the Promotion of Responsible Parenthood (FPRP), Curacao
 Fræðslusamtök um kynlíf og barneignir (FKB), Iceland
 Fundacion Educacion para la Salud Reproductiva (ESAR), Colombia
 Fundación Mexicana para la Planeación Familiar (MEXFAM)
 Fundacion Orientame, Colombia
 Gambia Family Planning Association (GFPA)
 Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS
 Grenada Planned Parenthood Association (GPPA)
 Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida, AC (GIRE), Mexico
 Guyana Responsible Parenthood
 Health Educations and Research Association (HERA), Macedonia
 Instituto Peruano de Paternidad Responsable (INPPARES)
 International AIDS Women Caucus (IAWC)
 International Planned Parenthood Federation, United Kingdom
 Iraqi Reproductive Health & Family Planning Association
 Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA)
 Irish Family Planning Association, Ireland
 Israel Family Planning Association (IFPA)
 Jamaica Family Planning Association (JFPA)
 Japan Family Planning Association, Inc. (JFPA)
 Kazakhstan Association on Sexual and Reproductive Health (KMPA)
 Kiribati Family Health Association
 Korean Family Planning & Maternal Child Health Association of DPRK (KFP&MCHA),
 Democratic People's Republic of Korea
 Latvijas Īmenes plānošanas un seksuālās veselības asociācija ūPapardes ziedsö (LAFPSH),
 Latvia

Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association (LPPA)
 Likhaan Center for Women's Health, Philippines
 Magyar Család- és Nővédelmi Tudományos Társaság, Hungary
 Mauritius Family Planning & Welfare Association (MFPWA)
 Mongolian Family Welfare Association (MFWA)
 Mouvement Français pour le Planning Familial (MFPF), France
 Mouvement Gabonais pour le Bien-Etre Familial (MGBEF), Gabon
 Mouvement Luxembourgeois pour le Planning Familial et l'Education Sexuelle (MLPFES),
 Luxembourg
 Namibia Planned Parenthood Association (NAPPA)
 Nepal International Consumers Union, Nepal
 New Zealand Family Planning Association (NZFPA)
 Österreichische Gesellschaft für Familienplanung (ÖGF), Austria
 Palestinian Family Planning and Protection Association
 Papua New Guinea Family Health Association
 Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG)
 Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL)
 Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT)
 Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia (PPAZ)
 Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN)
 Planned Population Federation of Korea (PPFK), Republic of Korea
 Population and Sustainability Network, United Kingdom
 PRO FAMILIA Bundesverband (PROFAMILIA), Germany
 Rahnuma-Family Planning Association of Pakistan (Rahnuma-FPAP)
 Reproductive & Family Health Association of Fiji (RFHAF)
 Reproductive Health Alliance of Kyrgyzstan (RHAK)
 Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia (RHAC)
 Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU)
 Respect Educate Nurture Empower Women, Bhutan
 Riksförbundet för Sexuell Upplysning (RFSU), Sweden
 Russian Family Planning Association (RFPA)
 Rutgers Nisso Group (RS), The Netherlands
 Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association (SLPPA)
 Samoa Family Health Association (SFHA)
 Seimos Planavimo ir Seksualines Sveikatos Asociacija (FPSHA), Lithuania
 Sensoa, Belgium
 Sex & Samfund - The Danish Family Planning Association
 Sex og Politikk, Norway
 Sexual Health & Family Planning Australia (SH & FPA)
 Shirkat Gah Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan
 Shoqata Shqiptare per Popullsin dhe Zhvillimin/ Albanian Center for Population and
 Development (ACPD), Albania
 Singapore Planned Parenthood Association (SPPA)
 Slovak Family Planning Association (SPR)
 Sociedade Civil Bem-Estar Familiar no Brasil (BEMFAM)
 Societatea de Educatie Contraceptiva si Sexuala (SECS), Romania

Societatea de Planificare a Familiei din Moldova (SPFM), Moldova
Society for Health Education (SHE), Maldives
Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association (SIPPA)
Společnost pro plánování rodiny a sexuální výchovu (SPRSV), Czech Republic
St. Vincent Planned Parenthood Association (SVPPA)
Stichting Lobi Suriname
Sudan Family Planning Association
Syrian Family Planning Association
Tajik Family Planning Alliance (TFPA), Tajikistan
Teen Services YHED, Bermuda
The Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association (IPPA)
Tonga Family Health Association (TFHA)
Towarzystwo Rozwoju Rodziny (TRR), Poland
Türkiye Aile Planlamasi Dernegi (TAPD), Turkey
Tuvalu Family Health Association
United Kingdom Family Planning Association (FPA)
Uzazi na Malezi Bora Tanzania (UMATI)
Uzbek Association on Reproductive Health (UARH), Uzbekistan
Väestöliitto, Finland
Vanuatu Family Health Association (VFHA)
Vietnam Family Planning Association (VINAFPA)
Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Mozambique
Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR), Turkey
Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) ó International Solidarity Network
Yemen Assembly for Reproductive Health
Youth Coalition for Sexual and Reproductive Rights