



News Release

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HARTFORD – The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), a policy and research arm of the General Assembly which works to end gender discrimination, today came out strongly against the “Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act” (H.R. 217), which the House of Representatives passed this week. The bill is aimed at stripping critical Title X funding from Planned Parenthood. Saying such funding cuts would drastically limit women’s access to comprehensive healthcare, especially among poor women, young adults and residents of rural locations, PCSW Executive Director Teresa C. Younger called upon the Senate to vote down the measure. Approximately 40,000 Connecticut residents rely on Title X funding.

Additionally, the PCSW opposes the so-called “Smith Bill” (H.R. 3), which further erodes women’s access to healthcare by taking away private health insurance coverage for abortions, even when carrying to term puts the mother’s health at risk.

“At a time when Congress should be finding ways to put people back to work, they are instead crafting policy that will erode women’s health and safety,” Younger said. “By focusing on abortion, the House is completely ignoring the fact that Planned Parenthood provides life-saving services to women across geographic, racial, economic and faith-based lines. One in five American women uses Planned Parenthood at some point in her lifetime, and at stake here are such vital services as pap smears, cervical cancer screenings, breast exams, treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, included HIV, and, of course, birth control.”

Connecticut has historically been a leader in progressive policy toward women’s reproductive rights. The landmark *Griswold v. Connecticut* case (1965) laid the foundation for *Roe v. Wade* nearly a decade later. In other policy decisions, such as the Family Medical Leave Act and the emergency contraception (“Plan B”) for victims of rape, Connecticut has protected the rights of women.

“We applaud Gov. Malloy for his support of a woman’s full reproductive rights,” Younger said in response to the Governor’s statements earlier this week. “He has shown both courage and logic in opposing efforts to cut funding to Planned Parenthood, and he understands how seriously women across the state would be affected. Like our entire Congressional delegation, many of our constitutional officers and many members of our General Assembly, Gov. Malloy is standing up for a woman’s access to *comprehensive* reproductive healthcare services. During a severe economic downturn, it’s often difficult for elected officials to remain faithful to policies that serve some of our most vulnerable populations, and we in Connecticut should be proud of a governor who has the political will to do just that.”

About the PCSW: The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women was formed in 1973 under Sec. 46a of the Connecticut General Statutes to study and improve Connecticut women’s economic security, health and safety; to promote consideration of qualified women to leadership positions and to work toward the elimination of gender discrimination. As a non-partisan arm of the General Assembly, the agency monitors, critiques and recommends changes to legislation in order to inform public policy, and assesses programs and practices in all State agencies for their effect on the state’s women. The PCSW serves as a liaison between government and its diverse constituents, and convenes stakeholders, including the business, non-profit and educational communities, local governments, and the media, in order to promote awareness of women’s issues.