To: Members of the Senate Health & Human Services Committee

From: Elisa Cafferata, Director of Government Relations, Nevada Advocates

Date: March 21, 2017

Re: Support for SJR8 - Urges Congress not to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Nevada Advocates for Planned Parenthood Affiliates (NAPPA) is the independent, non-partisan, nonprofit education, policy and advocacy arm of Planned Parenthood’s two affiliates (Mar Monte and the Rocky Mountains).

Planned Parenthood’s three Nevada health centers see over 18,000 patients each year. We offer affordable care, in some cases on a sliding fee scale; many of our patients have nowhere else to go for basic health care. We are proud of our long record of quality care -- over 35 years in Nevada -- always affordable, confidential, culturally appropriate, and welcoming to our clients. We also provide medically accurate and age appropriate sexual health education to youth and adults across our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for SJR 8 and the Affordable Care Act.

**Why the Affordable Care Act was needed**

Prior to the ACA’s full implementation, one in five women reported they postponed or went without preventive care because of cost, a much greater barrier for low-income and uninsured women.¹

The situation in Nevada was especially challenging. Nevada expanded Medicaid in 2014 under the guidelines laid out in the ACA. The Governor sent a letter to House Republicans on January 5, noting that more than 400,000 Nevada residents have gained coverage as a result of the ACA, in large part because of Medicaid expansion. Nevada’s uninsured rate also fell by nearly 40 percent from 2013 to 2015, going from 20.7 percent to 12.3 percent.²

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² Source: [https://www.healthinsurance.org/nevada-medicaid/](https://www.healthinsurance.org/nevada-medicaid/)
Before the ACA, even when women had insurance or had the option to buy it, they weren’t getting the health care they needed.

“Historically, insurance carriers selling plans on the individual insurance market adopted policies that specifically placed women at a disadvantage, either by charging them higher premiums than men for the same level of coverage (a practice called gender rating) or disqualifying them for coverage because they had certain pre-existing medical conditions, including pregnancy. (Or were victims of domestic violence)

“Many of the pre-ACA individually purchased policies did not include coverage for services that are important to women, such as maternity care, prescription medications, or treatment for mental health conditions such as depression.”³

Laurie Sobel, associate director of women’s health policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation, said contraceptive coverage is not a fringe benefit. “It’s an essential service for women, and it’s out of financial reach for many women to have the contraceptive method of their choice, or any contraceptive method, if they don’t have it covered by their insurance,” Sobel explained.⁴

But birth control is just the tip of the iceberg, advocates say. There are a number of other women’s health benefits that are also at risk. At or near the top of the list is guaranteed coverage of maternity services on the individual insurance market. Before the health law, it was unusual for plans in the individual market to pay for maternity services. In 2009, the year before the health law passed, just 13 percent of individual plans that were available to a 30-year-old woman in all the state capitals offered maternity benefits, according to an analysis by the National Women’s Law Center.⁵

Prior to the expansion, Medicaid did little to fill the gap.

“Historically, to qualify for Medicaid, women had to have very low incomes and be in one of Medicaid’s eligibility categories: pregnant, mothers of children 18 and younger, disabled, or over 65. Women who didn’t fall into these categories typically were not eligible regardless of how poor they were.”⁶

Under the Affordable Care Act, over 55 million women are saving $1.4 billion per year thanks to birth control with no co-pays.⁷ Health outcomes have improved in states that have actively pursued increasing access to health care. In Colorado, the rate of unintended teen pregnancies dropped by 40 percent and abortions by 35 percent.

⁵ http://www.wdef.com/2017/01/08/beyond-birth-control-how-trumpcare-might-affect-women/
⁷ http://www.motherjones.com/mojo/2015/07/obamacare-birth-control-study
**Why Planned Parenthood is needed**

Although Planned Parenthood health centers represent only 10% of the state’s safety net providers, they serve 41% of the clients in need of publicly supported family planning. Defunding Planned Parenthood will have a devastating impact on women’s access to care in Nevada.

Most women who obtain publicly funded family planning services do so at safety-net health centers. These family planning providers are particularly critical for those most likely to fall through the cracks of the U.S. health care system.  

Safety-net health centers include health departments, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), Planned Parenthood affiliates, hospital-based clinics and other independent agencies. In 2010, 56 publicly funded health centers in these five categories provided family planning services in Nevada, including 22 that received support from Title X. In Nevada, Planned Parenthood health centers meet a disproportionate share of the need, making them an indispensable part of the state’s safety-net.

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**Nevada Safety-Net Providers 2010**

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**Nevada Safety Net Providers in 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FQHCs</th>
<th>Health Dept</th>
<th>Hospital outpatient</th>
<th>Planned Parenthood</th>
<th>Indep clinics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of health centers</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of clients served</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/state-facts-publicly-funded-family-planning-services-nevada#7

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8 https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/state-facts-publicly-funded-family-planning-services-nevada#7  
Research shows Planned Parenthood health centers are better able to deliver high-quality, timely contraceptive care to more women than other types of publicly funded family planning providers. Investment in family planning ultimately saves the state money.

Women can often obtain care more quickly from Planned Parenthood. Sixty-two percent of Planned Parenthood health centers offer same-day appointments, a proportion similar to FQHCs (58%), but higher than health departments (42%). Moreover, the average wait for an initial contraceptive appointment at a Planned Parenthood health center is 1.2 days, while the average wait time for such a visit is 2.5 days at sites operated by FQHCs and 4.1 days for health department sites.

Planned Parenthood health centers are also the most likely to accommodate clients who have difficulty taking time off from work or family responsibilities to obtain care: Seventy-eight percent of Planned Parenthood health centers offer extended evening or weekend hours versus 57% of FQHCs and just 18% of health departments.

- Government spending for family planning in NV was $5.8 million in 2010.10
- “Publicly funded family planning centers in Nevada helped avert 9,100 unintended pregnancies in 2013 which would likely have resulted in 4,500 births and 3,100 abortions.”11
- By averting unintended pregnancies, publicly funded family planning services provided by safety-net health centers helped save the federal and state governments $30.6 million in Nevada in 2010.12

In 2010, the $5.8 million investment in family planning, which served less than 20% of the women in need, netted Nevada $30.6 million in total savings.13

The Affordable Care Act ensures that women get equal health care rights and improved access to the women’s health services they need. Those benefits are too large to ignore. Nevada must do everything it can to keep these protections in place.

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10 Guttmacher: https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/contraceptive-use-united-states
13 https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/state-facts-publicly-funded-family-planning-services-nevada