



the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy

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## **DOMESTIC GAG RULE REDUCES CONTRACEPTIVE ACCESS FOR OVER 475,000 WOMEN LIVING IN PENNSYLVANIA**

(Washington, D.C.) — According to data released by [Power to Decide](#), an estimated 476,090 Pennsylvania women of reproductive age (13-44) in need of publicly funded contraception live in counties impacted by the implementation of the Title X Family Planning Program “domestic gag rule.”

The domestic gag rule requires health providers receiving Title X funds to withhold information from patients about abortion services and care. In addition, health centers are required to cease providing abortion care with non-Title X funds at sites that offer Title X supported services, such as contraceptive care, breast and cervical cancer screening and STI testing. The new rule requires that abortion services, no matter how they are funded, must be performed at a separate physical site, which is impossible for many health centers.

“The implementation of the domestic gag rule could impact over 475,000 women of low income in Pennsylvania,” said Gillian Sealy, CEO, Power to Decide. “Women of low income in Pennsylvania already face a challenging contraceptive landscape which the federal rule exacerbates. Even before the implementation of the domestic gag rule, more than 750,000 women of low-income in Pennsylvania live in contraceptive deserts where they face barriers such as transportation, child care and taking unpaid time from work to get the contraception they need.”

Data from [Power to Decide](#) show that 752,340 women living at or below 250% of the poverty level in Pennsylvania live in contraceptive deserts, counties in which there is not reasonable access to a health center offering the full range of contraceptive methods. Nationally, more than 19 million U.S. women of low income live in [contraceptive deserts](#).

In this challenging landscape, states like Pennsylvania can take steps to partially alleviate the impact of damaging federal policies and to proactively expand access to contraception in various ways. Pennsylvania has already expanded Medicaid to low-income adults, which helps decrease the percentage of uninsured women, and by extension, give them contraceptive coverage. In addition, allowing pharmacists to prescribe contraception, and requiring insurance to cover an extended supply of prescription contraceptives can make it easier to access some contraceptive methods. Pennsylvania can also guard against additional barriers to access by enacting policies that protect insurance coverage of the full range of contraceptive methods. More information about these policies can be found [here](#).

**Power to Decide** is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that works to ensure all people—no matter who they are, where they live, or what their economic status might be—have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. Please visit us at [www.PowerToDecide.org](http://www.PowerToDecide.org) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.