



the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy

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DOMESTIC GAG RULE REDUCES CONTRACEPTIVE ACCESS FOR 30,000 WOMEN LIVING IN MISSOURI

(Washington, D.C.) — According to data released by [Power to Decide](#), an estimated [30,100 Missouri women](#) of reproductive age (13-44) in need of publicly funded contraception live in a county 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 some 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. In the face of these challenges, family planning providers are doing their best to provide high-quality service to their patients and fill gaps left in the wake of the disruption caused by the rule. “The implementation of the domestic gag rule could impact more than 30,000 women of low income in Missouri,” said Gillian Sealy, CEO, Power to Decide. “Women of low income in Missouri already face a challenging contraceptive landscape which the federal rule exacerbates. Even before the implementation of the domestic gag rule, close to 380,000 women of low-income in Missouri 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 [379,660 women](#) living at or below 250% of the poverty level in Missouri 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 Missouri can take steps to partially alleviate the impact of damaging federal policies and to proactively expand access to contraception in various ways. For example, through [The Right Time](#) initiative, a number of clinics in Missouri are providing free and low-cost contraception to those who need it and increasing access to the full range of contraceptive methods. Expanding Medicaid to low-income adults would help 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. To further expand access, Missouri could allow pharmacists to prescribe contraception. Missouri 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 or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.