



February 2, 2022

CONTACT: Paloma Zuleta
202-812-4477
pzuleta@powertodecide.org

MORE THAN 284,000 WOMEN IN MARYLAND LIVE IN CONTRACEPTIVE DESERTS

(Washington, D.C.) —According to data released by [Power to Decide](#), an estimated [284,640 women](#) living at or below 250% of the poverty level in Maryland live in contraceptive deserts, counties in which there is not reasonable access to a health center offering the full range of contraceptive methods. Of those in need living in contraceptive deserts, 1,720 live in counties without a single health center that provides the full range of contraceptive methods. Currently, across the country more than 19 million U.S. women of low income live in [contraceptive deserts](#).

“In Maryland, nearly 285,000 women must overcome significant barriers to access the contraception they need and deserve in order to decide if, when and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child,” said Raegan McDonald-Mosley, MD, MPH, CEO of Power to Decide. “The challenge of covering costs associated with obtaining family planning services—such as transportation, child care and unpaid time off from work—may be too great a burden for those already struggling to make ends meet.”

The Title X Family Planning Program “[domestic gag rule](#)” presented further challenges to contraceptive access. After more than one year of harm, the gag rule was permanently blocked from going into effect in Maryland in September 2020. Despite these difficulties, family planning providers have been making every effort to provide contraceptive services to patients across the state. Maryland has also taken proactive steps to alleviate the impact of the domestic gag rule and to expand access to contraception.

In addition to providing [state funds](#) to supplement the loss of federal Title X funds, Maryland has already expanded Medicaid to low-income adults, which helps decrease the percentage of uninsured women, and by extension, give them the contraceptive coverage they need to help live healthy lives. Maryland requires insurance to cover an extended supply of prescription contraceptives, as well as the full range of contraceptive methods. The state has also enacted policies that allow pharmacists to prescribe contraception.

More information about these policies can be found [here](#). In addition, information about Maryland’s telehealth policies relevant to contraceptive access 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](#).