



the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy

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## ACCORDING TO POWER TO DECIDE, 97 PERCENT OF WOMEN IN NEED LIVE IN CONTRACEPTIVE DESERTS

*19.5 Million Women in Need Are Most Impacted by Lack of Contraceptive Access*

(Washington, D.C.) — Updated research from Power to Decide on contraceptive access suggests that 97 percent of U.S. women in need of publicly funded contraception, age 13-44, live in contraceptive deserts—or counties in which there is not reasonable access to a health center that offers the full range of contraceptive methods. This comprises at least 19.5 million women across the United States, as illustrated in [Power to Decide’s contraceptive desert map](#).

The [contraceptive desert map](#) includes state and county level data as well as more detailed descriptions about the degree of access to the full range of contraceptive methods available through health centers. The updated information is meant to paint a picture of the deep gaps in health care access as well as to support state and local efforts to bridge gaps in access regionally and locally.

“The updated research on contraceptive access suggests a devastating gap in basic health care and highlights the fact that the vast majority of women in need already have trouble accessing birth control,” said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO, Power to Decide. “If allowed to go into effect, recent threats to overturn the Affordable Care Act and the administration’s domestic gag rule will further exacerbate U.S. women’s ability to access contraception and quality health care.”

Such efforts include the [final rule for the Title X Family Planning Program](#), also referred to as the “domestic gag rule.” The proposal would prevent Title X funding for high-quality, affordable contraceptive services in health centers that also offer abortion services unless those services are offered at a physically separate site. The rule allows health providers at sites that receive Title X funds to not provide information about abortion and effectively bans providers from referring for abortion. In addition, the President’s recent [2020 Fiscal Year budget proposal](#) would also hurt women and young people by restricting their access to proven public health and health care programs.

“These access gaps are most pronounced for women in need of publicly funded contraception who rely heavily on these health centers for their birth control,” Ehrlich continued. “Unfortunately, these women are often forced to travel far distances, navigate additional child care needs and take unpaid time off from work just to access this basic care. We, as a nation, must do better.”

According to research by Power to Decide, the [vast majority of people across political party lines \(81 percent\)](#) in the United States agree that birth control is basic health care.

“Our focus as a nation should be on supporting and expanding programs that provide women the access to health care they need and deserve, not dismantling them,” Ehrlich said.

**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.