

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

December 17, 2021

The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra,

We write in strong support of the application submitted by Planned Parenthood of Northern New England (PPNNE) for a \$500,000 grant from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health's 'Funding to Address Dire Need for Family Planning Services' Program (Funding Opportunity Number PA-FPH-22-003). Federal aid would address critical funding shortfalls that will impact the availability of health care to thousands of Granite Staters – mainly women – who rely on PPNNE for a variety of services.

As a result of recent actions taken by New Hampshire's Executive Council, multiple family planning providers in our state, including PPNNE, are not receiving any federal or state funds to support their vital work. The providers, of which PPNNE is the largest, who were recently defunded by the Executive Council provide eighty-percent of the family planning services in New Hampshire. In 2019, the majority of the Title X grantees in New Hampshire, including PPNNE, had no choice but to exit the program due to the previous administration's so-called 'Title X Gag Rule.' The absence of state or federal support will continue to diminish PPNNE's services should they not be awarded supplemental relief.

Unfortunately, New Hampshire providers face a unique situation in order to receive federal funds. Contracts containing federal funds granted to New Hampshire family planning providers, including PPNNE, must be approved by the state's Executive Council, which has continually defunded providers seeking Title X funding. The Executive Council has made clear that they have no plan to support PPNNE, and these actions make it all the more vital for PPNNE, New Hampshire's largest family planning provider, to access relief funds through the 'Funding to Address Dire Need for Family Planning Services' Program.

Without immediate and direct federal support, the many patients who receive care through PPNNE will lose access to important health services including breast cancer screenings, cervical cancer screenings, contraception and other reproductive health services. Populations who already face significant barriers to care – including the low-income and uninsured, people of color, LGBTQIA+ individuals and residents of rural communities – will be disproportionately affected by a shortage of accessible services. This would come at a time when New Hampshire providers and residents are navigating the worst public health crisis in over a century and as New Hampshire's first-ever abortion ban is set to go into effect in January. There is undoubtedly an urgent need for additional federal aid until PPNNE is able to access funding from the fully-restored Title X program.

We strongly support the application submitted by PPNNE and stand ready to work with you to deliver critical relief to this important family planning provider and the patients it serves. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices if you have any further questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



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Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



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Maggie Hassan  
United States Senator



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Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



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Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress