



American Medical Women's Association  
The Vision and Voice of Women in Medicine since 1915

October 6, 2018

The Honorable Secretary Alex Azar  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Hubert H. Humphrey Building  
200 Independence Avenue S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 2020

Dear Secretary Azar,

As members of the American Medical Women's Association and both future and current physicians, we write to register our concerns about the proposed changes to the Title X family planning program. These proposed changes would prevent Title X funding of providers, or health centers, that discuss or perform abortion. These changes would in effect constitute a domestic "gag rule" that would block access to affordable care and information for over four million low income and underserved families.

The Title X program provides support for family planning services as well as basic preventative health care, including cancer screenings, birth control, sexually transmitted infection (STI) screenings, pregnancy testing, and well-women exams. The proposed rule, by blocking access to healthcare, would be devastating to millions of women across the country. By denying patients full information about their health care options, the foundation of informed consent would be breached. Consequently, this would undermine the trusting patient-physician relationship. Organizations like Planned Parenthood that receive Title X funding consist of compassionate experts that are dedicated to their patients and provide both reproductive and preventative care. Patients seeking reproductive and family planning help from a trusting and affordable source would be stripped of their freedoms should this regulation be implemented.

Not only would this rule harm the well-being and economic security of underserved women across the nation, but it would be a direct violation of the basic ethics of the medical and nursing professions by requiring health care professionals to withhold valuable information from patients.

We urge you to withdraw the proposed rule and any other proposals that restrict affordable family planning care under Title X.

Sincerely,

Kelly Mamelson, AMWA Advocacy Committee Medical Student

Connie Newman, MD President AMWA

And the AMWA Advocacy Committee Members

**American Medical Women's Association**

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