

THE ADVOCATE

Public Outcry Protects Planned Parenthood Services

Locals Share Stories, Sign Postcards, and Tweet Their Support

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Broken Imagery

More than 600 supporters rallied for Planned Parenthood on the Boston Common in March. Speakers included U.S. Representatives Michael Capuano and Niki Tsongas, Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll, and Nurse Practitioner Lindsey Piper (pictured above), who shared stories about patients helped by PPLM clinicians.

By now, you probably know the story of how Planned Parenthood almost lost federal funding that allows those in need to get affordable health care. But do you know the behind-the-scenes story?

This spring, conservative Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives passed an amendment to ban Planned Parenthood from accessing federal funding. Ultimately, they failed in the Senate – despite threats of a government shutdown

over pap smears and birth control.

You were part of a huge public outcry. The number of people who “like” Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts’ (PPLM’s) Facebook page more than quadrupled. More than 825,000 Americans signed a letter to Congress expressing their outrage. Thousands of patients told their stories, which we shared with legislators.

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THE ISSUE: A ban on federal funding for Planned Parenthood would mean millions of low-income women losing birth control, annual exams, and cancer screenings.

THE RESPONSE: Voters here and across the U.S. spoke up: 825,000 signed an online petition, 600+ rallied on Boston Common, and thousands of patients told their stories.



Attacks on Planned Parenthood ignore the facts: Family planning funds help low-income families while saving taxpayers money.

In the last year, we've seen unprecedented federal and state actions to restrict sexual and reproductive health. Many of these efforts were aimed at defunding Planned Parenthood or blocking us from participating in public health programs. The activity we've seen is shocking not only in its volume – 916 bills in state legislatures – but in the way that the proposals would undermine women's health.

When anti-Planned Parenthood leaders in Congress failed to eliminate Title X family planning funds for low-income women and restrict Planned Parenthood from getting any federal funds, they took their strategy to the states. As of May, Indiana had passed legislation preventing local women from using Medicaid at Planned Parenthood health centers for preventive visits. Other states including Texas, Kansas, Wisconsin, and Tennessee were considering a variety of bills that would restrict family planning or abortion.

Many legislators talk about job creation and deficit reduction, but they seem to ignore proven fixes that interfere with their political agenda. Recently, the Brookings Institution reported that preventing

unintended pregnancies would reduce the deficit. They estimate that unintended pregnancies cost state and federal governments \$11 billion each year. While this isn't a total cure for the larger deficit issue, it's common sense to continue proven programs that support families while helping to balance the budget.

Despite these political distractions, we continue to be focused on our core programs and services. The reason we can be here for thousands of women, families, and teens is because you're here for us. Every day, I'm proud to stand up for Planned Parenthood because I know that you're standing right beside me. Thank you for being here for PPLM.

Dianne Luby
President/CEO

PLANNED PARENTHOOD
LEAGUE OF MASSACHUSETTS

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Flexible Ways to Donate Your Time

Volunteers are an important part of every aspect of Planned Parenthood's work. You can commit to a long-standing weekly or monthly opportunity, like taking a shift on the Sexual Health Counseling & Referral Hotline or being a clinic escort one Saturday a month. If you're interested in a more flexible opportunity, Monday Night Volunteers help with administrative projects every week and you can come as often as your schedule allows. PPLM also welcomes college students as interns throughout the year, in areas including education, finance, development, human resources, and in our health centers.

For more information about volunteering and internships at PPLM, visit www.pplm.org/volunteer, or call Elizabeth Harkness, Volunteer Program Manager, at (617) 616-1645.

DONATE NOW AT
www.pplm.org/donate



IUD Study in Uganda Aims to Improve Usage

The IUD is recognized as one of the most effective reversible forms of birth control. More women in the U.S. are choosing IUDs, but how can we promote this method in developing countries, where women have less access to health care?

One of PPLM's Family Planning Fellows, under the guidance of Research Center Director Dr. Alisa Goldberg, is looking into this question. The Fellow has just begun a study in Uganda comparing women who receive an IUD immediately after a c-section

with those who receive an IUD six weeks following childbirth, as is currently the practice in Uganda. By changing this standard, we anticipate improved usage and satisfaction with the IUD. In developing countries, where women might have to travel hundreds of miles to see a doctor, it is particularly important to make long-lasting birth control accessible for women seeking to prevent pregnancies. This is PPLM's first international research study.

Reducing Stigma on HIV Testing Day and Every Day

HIV/AIDS rates have been on the decline, but the CDC estimates that 1 in 5 Americans living with HIV don't know their HIV status. On June 27, PPLM and health care advocates across the country will observe National HIV Testing Day to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS and encourage people to get tested.

At PPLM, we use a rapid HIV test, so patients receive their results within ten minutes and don't have to make a return

trip to the health center. Every visit to PPLM includes information about how women and men can protect themselves against STDs, including HIV. And, we refer patients requiring further information and treatment to our network of over 100 health and community partners across the state. By openly discussing HIV testing, we can reduce the stigma and further decrease infection rates.

Planned Parenthood Votes Impact Election Day Decisions

This spring's fight over federal funding for Planned Parenthood (see cover story) opened a nationwide dialogue about our country's values. New polling data in Massachusetts supports what we heard across the country: that voters support Planned Parenthood.

A poll conducted this spring by Public Policy Polling showed that two-thirds of Massachusetts voters support federal funding for birth control, cervical and breast cancer screenings, and Planned Parenthood health centers. What's more, 61% said that they would be less likely to vote for their Senator if he or she voted to bar Planned Parenthood from receiving federal funding for these services. This polling data was



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instrumental in our efforts to show our elected officials that in addition to being good public health policy, funding for family planning and Planned Parenthood is an issue that voters care about.

Your Campaign Gifts Are Working Immediately for Women and Families

Four years into the Sexual Health Matters Campaign, we've accomplished many of the things we laid out in our strategic plan – like opening a new Central Massachusetts Health Center and three other family planning sites in that region, implementing electronic medical records, and developing middle and high school sex ed curricula. You've donated \$25 million to make this happen. With only \$5 million of our \$30 million goal remaining, each dollar has an even greater impact on our remaining priorities. Here are some of the things that are still left to do:

Finish the independent long-term evaluation of our middle school curriculum. Wellesley Centers for Women is conducting a five-year evaluation of *Get Real* and the first year of results show that our curriculum is working (story, page 5). But we need to raise the funds necessary to complete the project, so we will have scientific evidence for schools seeking a sex ed curriculum and more kids can get the information they need to stay healthy.

Develop and execute an outreach campaign in Central Massachusetts. Our opposition has us narrowly defined as an abortion provider, when it's only a small portion of what we do. We know that women in the area need affordable family planning, and an outreach campaign will spread the word about our new health centers in Fitchburg, Marlborough, and Milford and change perceptions about Planned Parenthood. This will ultimately increase the number of women able to access local, affordable health care.

Campaign Progress

(in Millions)



Make sexual health an integral part of health care reform implementation.

As Massachusetts and the country grapple with how to implement the Affordable Care Act, there are decisions to be made that will impact how insurance covers women's health services. And, in Massachusetts, payment reform efforts are underway that will affect the continued availability of services. PPLM is providing leadership at the state and national levels to make sure that women's health is front and center in the discussions.

All the funds raised through the Sexual Health Matters Campaign are being put to work immediately, so you can see the impact you're having on the women and families we serve. If you're interested in hearing more – or if you have friends you'd like to introduce us to – we'd love to talk more about how you can be a leader in your community.

For more information, contact Claudia Luck, Senior Vice President for Development, at Claudia_Luck@pplm.org or (617) 616-1643.

“LIKE” PPLM ON FACEBOOK to stay up to date on the latest sexual health info and news! Visit pplm.org/facebook.

Public Outcry Protects Planned Parenthood Services

(continued from cover)



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Polling data shows that two-thirds of Massachusetts voters support federal funding for Planned Parenthood, and 61% would be less likely to vote for a Senator who opposed this funding. We wanted legislators to hear that their constituents support Planned

Parenthood, and cutting family planning funds is not the way to reduce the deficit.

One of our most intense organizing efforts centered around a March 19th rally on Boston Common. News about the rally spread by word of mouth, on Facebook and Twitter, and through our ally organizations. Congressman Michael Capuano, Congresswoman Niki Tsongas, and Salem Mayor Kim Driscoll led the crowd of 600-plus in calls to “Defend, Don’t Defund.”

In addition to the rally and thousands of calls and emails to legislators, PPLM

President/CEO Dianne Luby led local staff and supporters to visits in Washington. Senator John Kerry has always been a leader on behalf of women’s health, and we wanted to thank him and his staff in person. And, we delivered more than 1,000 signed postcards in support of Planned Parenthood to Senator Brown. Here at home, staff and supporters met with six House members or their aides.

A key moment during the House debate came when Rep. Stephen Lynch spoke in support of Planned Parenthood and our shared goal of reducing the number of abortions. It was a courageous position for a pro-life legislator and we were proud to have Rep. Lynch as an ally in supporting access to birth control.

We didn’t know for certain that we had Senator Brown’s support until the legislation came to the floor in the Senate on April 14th. The amendment’s defeat was proof of all of the work that supporters did in Massachusetts and nationally. We’re certain that without you, millions of women would be without the preventive health care they need from Planned Parenthood.

After One Year of *Get Real*, Students 45% Less Likely to Have Sex

This spring, PPLM’s *Get Real* sex education curriculum reached two important milestones. First, in March, the 100th school – Four Rivers Charter School in Greenfield – signed up to use *Get Real*. Just a few weeks later, we got back early findings from a Wellesley Centers for Women evaluation, which shows that *Get Real* is working.

According to the evaluation, students enrolled in *Get Real* were 45% less likely to report that they had sex, compared with peers not enrolled in the curriculum. This is a preliminary finding after students have received just one year of the three-year

curriculum. We are extremely encouraged by the findings and will continue to assess *Get Real*’s impact on sexual activity, and, as students get older, their use of protection methods. More than 140 educators have been trained to teach *Get Real* in their own classrooms, reaching over 23,000 students with messages about abstinence, healthy relationships, decision making, and safer sex. *Get Real* continues to grow over the 100-school milestone with schools enrolled across Massachusetts, and in New York, Rhode Island, and Texas.

Top 5 Questions Answered by Counseling & Referral Volunteers



The Hotline can be reached at (800) 258-4448 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. – 8 p.m., and Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.

One of PPLM's greatest resources is our Sexual Health Counseling & Referral Hotline. It's free, and staffed 52 hours each week by a group of 40 dedicated volunteers, some of whom have been with PPLM for nearly 30 years. They go through eight weeks of training to learn how to connect people to the services they need, and to provide accurate information without judgment.

Last year, volunteers answered more than 25,000 calls from people across Massachusetts – men, women, parents, teens, and school counselors looking for answers to their questions about sex, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), abortion, and much more. Sarah Fuller, Patient Contact Center Manager, shared some of the questions answered on a typical day.

“I missed a birth control pill – what do I do?” Volunteers work closely with callers to answer questions about how to correctly use their birth control. Most often, we advise callers to use a back-up method, like a condom, to be sure they're protected. We also make sure they know that appointments with PPLM clinicians are available, so patients can choose a method that is right for them.



Tom Kates

“I had unprotected sex last night – could I be at risk for an STI?” Volunteers answer questions about how STIs are transmitted, symptoms, and STIs that can be present without symptoms. Callers who are concerned are advised to come to a PPLM health center for testing.

“Is abortion the right choice for me?” While volunteers are unable to answer personal questions like this, they do help callers think through the issue for themselves, and provide resources for parenting, adoption, and abortion.

“Can I get pregnant during my period?” Volunteers answer questions about sexuality and sexual behaviors and debunk myths.

“I need a medical or social service that is not provided at PPLM.” PPLM gives referrals to a network of more than 500 providers throughout New England and beyond, including prenatal care; parenting resources; and adoption, social, and counseling service agencies.

The Counseling & Referral Hotline means peace of mind for thousands of people each year because of the generosity of our donors, who provide the funding that allows us to make this service available at no cost to those who use it. For a confused teenager, a stressed parent, or a nervous college student, it's comforting to know that help is on the other end of the phone line.

PPFA President Cecile Richards visited Boston to fire up supporters during February's Celebration of Choices. In December, Cambridge Friends gathered for their annual house party, and technology was the focus of The Social {Sexual Health} Network event in April.



Photos by FayFoto/Boston

CAMBRIDGE HOUSE PARTY

From left to right: Event co-chairs Katie Salter and Gail Roberts with PPLM President/CEO Dianne Luby and host Gwill York; Marilyn and James Heskett; Board members Pat Deutch (left) and Anne Columbia (right) with Richard Lester



Photos by Lipofsky.com

CELEBRATION OF CHOICES

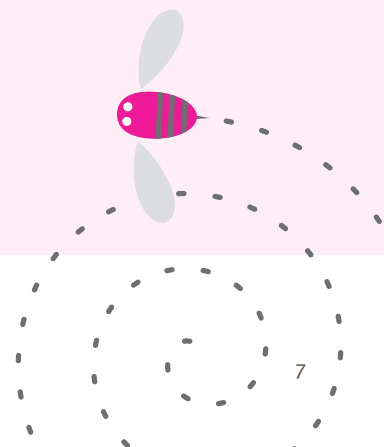
From left to right: Event co-chairs Alicia Abad (left) and Alison Packard (right) with Dianne Luby and Planned Parenthood Federation of America President Cecile Richards; 2011 Campbell-Faulkner Award Recipient Ilene Greenberg and Melissa Gerrity; Board Chair Dharma Cortés and board member Jill Block



Photos by Lipofsky.com

THE SOCIAL {SEXUAL HEALTH} NETWORK

From left to right: Event co-chairs Tamar Frieze and Jojo Longnecker; Planned Parenthood Federation of America VP for Strategic Initiatives Tom Subak, Dianne Luby, and hosts Shelly and Ofer Nemirovsky; Julia Owens, Anja Kola, Judy Reed Smith, and Normand Smith



Medical Committee Chair Went From Staff Physician to Volunteer Leader

As the father of two young boys, Dr. Steven Ralston has many hopes for his children. “I hope that they will be open, knowledgeable, and considerate in relationships,” he says. “Information gives people power to control what happens to them and others around them. Planned Parenthood gives that power to so many people.”

Steven is an OB/GYN specializing in Maternal-Fetal Medicine at Tufts Medical Center. He chairs PPLM’s Medical Committee and has been a Board member since 2008. Before joining the Board, he was a physician at PPLM for more than 10 years. Steven became motivated to get involved after the 1994 shootings in Brookline that killed employees at PPLM’s health center and another clinic nearby. Working at PPLM, Steven saw how committed the staff members are to our mission. “Planned Parenthood is an entry to the health care system for people who wouldn’t have access otherwise,” he says. “We’re often the only care provider women and men see in their early years.”

Steven’s time as a PPLM provider gives him an additional perspective as chair of the Medical Committee, and allows him to relate



Dr. Steven Ralston (left), pictured with his partner Rob Hair and children Kofi and Gil. As chair of PPLM’s Medical Committee, Dr. Ralston is committed to upholding Planned Parenthood’s reputation as a trusted provider of high-quality care.

to staff as a colleague who knows how policy changes can impact day-to-day work. The committee issues guidelines and procedures related to PPLM’s medical and research services with an emphasis on keeping them safe, efficient, patient-friendly, and up-to-date with the latest advances.

Steven says, “I have devoted a lot of time to Planned Parenthood and I don’t regret any of it – it always feels fulfilling. Even if I get home late and miss putting the kids to bed, it’s so worthwhile because of what the organization stands for.”

Administrative Headquarters

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Health Center Locations

Boston
Fitchburg
Marlborough
Milford
Somerville
Springfield
Worcester

www.pplm.org
1-800-258-4448

GIVING IS EASY

A Bequest Can Honor a Loved One

For Jeanne McNett and Nick Athanassiou, making a bequest to PPLM was a way to honor one legacy and to start a new one of their own.

Nick’s mother, Athena, was a global leader on behalf of women. She was a founding member and president of the Greek YWCA and served as president of the international YWCA. Athena’s vision for social justice is echoed in Jeanne and Nick’s support for PPLM. Jeanne joined PPLM’s Central Massachusetts Advisory Committee a year

ago to become an advocate for Planned Parenthood in her community.

“Athena was firmly committed to women’s rights and education,” says Jeanne. “What better way to honor her life than to support her values at work in PPLM?”

Making a bequest is easy. You can name a specific dollar amount or a percentage of assets to go to PPLM. Contact Jan Stephenson Kelly at jskelly@pplm.org or (617) 629-8628 for information or for suggested language to add to your will.