

Testimony of Susan Lloyd Yolen, Vice President,  
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February 24, 2009, Human Services Committee

SB927, AAC the Quality of Services for Recipients of Services under a Medicaid Waiver

Good morning, Senator Doyle, Representative Walker and members of the committee, and thank you for this opportunity to address SB 927. My name is Susan Yolen and I am the Vice President for Public Affairs & Communication for Planned Parenthood of Connecticut, the state's largest provider of family planning and reproductive health care.

Last week in testimony, I reminded this committee that in 2005 the General Assembly almost unanimously directed the Department of Social Services to apply for a federal 1115 family planning demonstration waiver. Already a mandated benefit under Medicaid, family planning has a 90 cents to the dollar reimbursement rate...far greater than the federal match for other Medicaid services. I noted last week that if we are helping women on Medicaid to avert additional unintended pregnancies, it makes even greater sense to offer family planning services to low income women, not eligible for Medicaid but at risk of requiring it if they became pregnant and bear a child?

As you may recall DSS did, in 2006, prepare an excellent family planning waiver request which was returned for revisions last year. We know that the Obama strongly supports family planning as an essential health service for women of reproductive age as well as a significant cost saving measure. We expect that the new Administration will expand access to family planning, perhaps even making the waiver process unnecessary in the near future.

According to the Guttmacher Institute *four public dollars are saved for every public dollar spent on family planning*. Job loss and associated loss of insurance coverage is already showing us that Connecticut's women and families are being challenged to find the resources to pay for monthly contraceptive supplies. For most families, the timing could not be worse for an unplanned pregnancy.

Twenty six states that have already reaped the benefits of a family planning expansion. Implementation of such a waiver here in Connecticut would likewise save millions The Guttmacher Institute estimates that establishing parity between the Medicaid eligibility level for family planning and the level for pregnancy-related care (250% of FPL) in Connecticut would result in:

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Expansion participants:	39,900
Unplanned pregnancies averted:	5,800
Abortions averted:	2,300
Medicaid-funded births averted:	2,700
Savings from Medicaid-funded births averted:	\$ 33.2 million
Cost of expansion program:	\$ 7.7 million
Total net savings:	\$ 25.5 million
Federal savings:	\$ 9.9 million
State savings:	\$ 15.5 million

Note: Data are the estimated annual impact of an expansion by the third year. In 2006, when this study was conducted, the income ceiling for Medicaid coverage

*was 157% of poverty, while the ceiling for pregnancy-related care was 185% of poverty.*

**We ask that this committee direct the Department of Social Services to forward the state's family planning waiver request to CMS by upon passage of this bill or by July 1, 2009, rather than the September deadline in the bill. We believe this is achievable since the waiver application is virtually ready to go and has been for some time.**