

Testimony of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England
Susan Lloyd Yolen, Vice President, Public Affairs & Communication
Appropriations Committee Hearing on the Deficit Mitigation Plan
March 11, 2010

Good evening, I am Susan Yolen, Vice President, Public Affairs and Communication, for Planned Parenthood of Southern New England. PPSNE is the largest provider of basic reproductive health care and family planning services in Connecticut and Rhode Island. I'm here tonight to express serious concern about a proposed cut of about 30% to the DPH community health services budget line—a line that totals less than \$7 million, and a projected cut of over \$2 million.

This budget line includes approximately \$1 million in funding for subsidized family planning services that were utilized by *over 35,000 individuals*, mostly women, in fiscal year 2009...women from every city and town in Connecticut. The Planned Parenthood centers and other providers who accept this state support used it to serve over 2000 Bridgeport residents, over 1000 Danbury residents, over 3500 New Haveners, 2000 Hartford residents and 2800 Waterbury residents. This grant also served 136 residents of Lyme, 145 women from Plainville, 103 from Newtown and 193 from Winchester. I've attached a list for those of you who'd like to see how many of your constituents received DPH family planning services last year.

Many of these women, from every corner of our state, have been hard hit by the year's economy. They rely on the DPH family planning program to access the basic services and supplies they needed in order to prevent an unintended pregnancy. For the individual woman and her family, the timing of children is a matter of choice, and personal preference. For the State of Connecticut, it's a matter of savings, since **every public dollar spent on family planning in Connecticut saves over four public dollars, within the year**, on the costs associated with prenatal care, delivery and pediatric care later spent by the Medicaid program.

In the overall picture, and against a mounting deficit, we know this is a small budget line, and a relatively modest cut. And family planning providers are willing to take our lumps with everyone else—no more, no less. We are frustrated, however, by the fact that, like so many nonprofits that rely on public grants, Planned Parenthood and our colleagues have received essentially the same grant for over twenty years, making do while our costs...for supplies, medications and skilled medical providers...have increased steadily.

As part of the state's nonprofit sector, Planned Parenthood believes that ultimately the solution to the budget crisis lies not in shredding the safety net of health and social services that protect our state and its citizens in hard times, but in *using these essential community services* to prevent the costs that inevitably result from health care postponed or neglected. We support a state budget that combines revenue enhancement strategies with sensible cuts that preserve the services people need, at a time when they need them the most. Thank you.