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**Testimony in Favor of S.B. 274 An Act Concerning Increased Funding to Planned Parenthood and Other Family Planning Clinics Human Services Committee
3/5/2020**

My name is Sally Grossman and I am from Windsor. I am testifying in strong support of S.B. 274, An Act Concerning Increased Funding to Planned Parenthood and Other Family Planning Clinics.

Title X is an important family planning program that helps low income individuals access important preventive sexual and reproductive healthcare that they may not otherwise have access to. These services include safe and effective birth control, sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment, cancer screenings, pregnancy tests and counseling, and sexual education. Being a low-income woman myself, I have relied on Planned Parenthood for services in the past, including birth control and exams. Without the sliding fee scale offered by Planned Parenthood, I would never have been able to afford these important healthcare services.

Title X funding has enjoyed bipartisan support since being enacted by the Nixon administration in 1970. Not until recently has Title X funding been tied to an anti-choice agenda, despite that fact that its services help reduce the rate of unintended pregnancies and thus the number of abortions needed and performed. Also, despite the fact the Title X funding does not, and has never, funded abortion. But because of the services provided by clinics enrolled in Title X, millions of unintended pregnancies have been prevented. In 2016, women who obtained birth control from Title X providers were able to postpone or avoid two million pregnancies. This publicly supported care prevented some one million births and nearly 700,00 abortions.ⁱ Birth control and sexual education are vital tools in helping individuals decide if, and when, they want to start a family. And for low-income individuals, Title X is often the only resource they have in assisting with their family planning needs.

88% of Title X patients in Connecticut are served by Planned Parenthood of Southern New England. That means that 88% of Title X patients, that's over 41,000 people, in CT are in danger of losing access to vital preventive sexual and reproductive healthcare services if the state does not provide the additional funding that was lost due to the gag rule imposed by the Trump administration. Individuals served by Title X are some of the most vulnerable among us and their healthcare access should not be determined by political whims or religious beliefs.

I applaud the elected leaders in Connecticut who support not only a person's right to bodily autonomy, but also ensuring healthcare is a human right that all people can access. I strongly support S.B. 274 and urge the legislature to vote in favor of funding family planning providers, including Planned Parenthood of Southern New England. Thank you for your time and consideration.

ⁱ Publicly Supported Family Planning Services in the United States: Likely Need, Availability and Impact, 2016
<https://www.guttmacher.org/report/publicly-supported-FP-services-US-2016>