

March 6, 2025

Dear Senators and Representatives,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we urge Congress to preserve foreign assistance for global health that includes investments in international family planning. Family planning is fundamental, time sensitive, life-saving health care for millions of women and families. It also increases women's and girls' education and labor force participation, which positively impacts economic growth and stability and builds stronger families, communities, and countries.

A majority of Americans believe that all people should have access to contraception¹. They also believe that U.S. policies that lead to higher maternal mortality rates around the world are concerning, and they do not support the U.S. government attempting to control people's bodies and lives, whether in the U.S. or in low and middle income countries.

We see a clear and distinct threat to family planning, in part because the State Department explicitly excluded family planning from waivers for life-saving services, and now has terminated over 90% of USAID contracts and grants, including for programs that previously received waivers. Congress must insist that the Administration immediately release the funds they appropriated for international family planning and we urge you to continue appropriating funds for these important programs in all future spending bills.

Investments in global health make up less than .1% of the U.S. federal budget.² Congress' appropriation of just over \$600 million in U.S. assistance for global family planning and reproductive health programs annually, including funding for UNFPA, has not increased for the last 14 years. In FY 2024, the \$607.5 million appropriated provided 47.6 million women and couples with modern contraceptive care, which prevented 17.1 million unintended pregnancies, and saved the lives of 34,000 women and girls who otherwise would have died from complications of pregnancy and childbirth.³ Investing in voluntary contraceptive services is also cost-effective: every dollar invested in family planning services saves three dollars in pregnancy-related and newborn care costs.

If this funding is not restored and sustained in annual appropriations bills, life-saving health services will continue to be dismantled in communities around the world. Maintained support from USAID and UNFPA is critical because it complements efforts in many communities that are making their own investments in expanding access to family planning. Without our support, more health clinics will be forced to close, outreach efforts to underserved populations will be eliminated or reduced, and more people will lose access to contraception and other essential health services. In just 90 days of suspended assistance, 11.7 million women and girls will be

¹ <https://navigatorresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Navigator-Update-03.06.2024.pdf>

² <https://www.kff.org/global-health-policy/issue-brief/u-s-global-health-budget-figures/#Figure1>

³ <https://www.gutmacher.org/2025/02/just-numbers-impact-us-international-family-planning-assistance-2024>

denied care, resulting in 4.2 million unintended pregnancies and 8,340 preventable maternal deaths.⁴

We know from research that when U.S. investment in international family planning is undermined, there are broad consequences. People have less access to a range of health services – including reproductive, maternal and child health care, HIV prevention and treatment, tuberculosis, malaria and even some nutrition programs – or no access at all. Furthermore, the consequences of program interruptions are long-lasting – even when funding is restored, it increases costs and takes time to rebuild what was lost. Health programs that were forced to shut down could take years to restart interrupted services, rebuild programs, and partnerships and rehire staff. The erosion of trust that this has already caused could take longer to overcome.

It is imperative Congress take immediate action to resume foreign aid, hold the administration accountable for making all payments, end stop work orders and the associated holds on payments, and then continue to invest in comprehensive, evidence-informed family planning as part of foreign assistance appropriations. Congress has supported investments in international family planning – with bipartisan and bicameral support – for six decades and over 11 presidential administrations, recognizing that this is lifesaving work. Don't stop now.

Signed,

1. Advocates for Youth
2. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
3. American Jewish World Service
4. American Public Health Association
5. American Society for Reproductive Medicine
6. Amnesty International USA
7. Catholics for Choice
8. Center for Biological Diversity
9. Center for Reproductive Rights
10. FP2030
11. Guttmacher Institute
12. Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America
13. Ibis Reproductive Health
14. International Center for Research on Women
15. Ipas
16. Justice and Joy National Collaborative
17. National Council of Jewish Women
18. National Institute for Reproductive Health
19. National Organization for Women Foundation
20. PAI
21. Partners in Abortion Care
22. Physicians for Reproductive Health

⁴ <https://www.guttmacher.org/2025/01/family-planning-impact-trump-foreign-assistance-freeze>

23. Planned Parenthood Federation of America
24. Population Connection Action Fund
25. Population Council
26. Population Institute
27. Positive Women's Network-USA
28. Religious Community for Reproductive Choice
29. Reproductive Freedom for All
30. Reproductive Health Access Project
31. SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change
32. UCSF Bixby Center for Global Reproductive Health
33. Universal Access Project
34. Women's Refugee Commission