



Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona

**PLANNED PARENTHOOD ADVOCATES OF ARIZONA**

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**Arizona Planned Parenthood Supporters Are Fighting Back Against Bill to Block Millions From Birth Control, Cancer Screenings**



*ACA and Planned Parenthood Town Hall in Phoenix  
Photo credit: Alonso Parra*

TUCSON, AZ - One day after Speaker Paul Ryan and GOP leadership introduced legislation to block millions of people from birth control and cancer screenings at Planned Parenthood, supporters in Arizona swiftly responded with a call to action, a rally outside Rep. Martha McSally's office.

**Statement from Melissa Garcia, Tucson Raiz Organizer:**

“People in Arizona are making their voices heard — we don’t want reproductive health care attacked. We’re standing together as women, people of color, immigrants, and as people of faith, and we’re fighting back to make sure that every single politician in Arizona knows that we will not stand for defunding Planned Parenthood. We’re not going to silently stand around while politicians in Washington try to take away our health care.”

**Statement from Jodi Liggett, Vice President of Public Affairs of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona:**

“People don’t go to Planned Parenthood to make a political statement; they go there for affordable, quality health care. In Arizona alone, more than 33,000 of people are provided with health care services. Without Planned Parenthood, thousands in Arizona would be left with nowhere else to go. Our supporters aren’t going to let that happen.

Today at 4:45 p.m., Planned Parenthood patients, supporters, and community partners plan to rally outside [Congresswoman Martha McSally’s office](#) in Tucson. Constituents will share why blocking access to care at Planned Parenthood and the unraveling of the ACA will have devastating effects for them and their families.

Two weeks ago Rep. Martha McSally held a town hall in Sahuarita where she was asked by Deja Foxx, a high school student and Planned Parenthood patient about the future of Planned Parenthood and no-copay birth control. McSally responded that other federally qualified health centers would fill the gap which has been [resoundingly dismissed by experts](#). In fact, Dr. Georges Benjamin, the executive director of the American Public Health Association, called the idea [“ludicrous.”](#)

**Statement from Deja Foxx, Planned Parenthood patient:**

“While McSally did express her support for Title X, the answer I received concerning Planned Parenthood was, essentially, that I should go somewhere else for the care I need. This answer is ignorant of the close bond Planned Parenthood has with the young people in our community. Planned Parenthood is where many of my peers and I feel comfortable and encouraged to ask questions; it is the care provider of choice for many Arizonans, especially young people. In not supporting Planned Parenthood, Martha McSally is doing the youth of Arizona a great disservice. The actions of GOP lawmakers surrounding defunding Planned Parenthood concerns me not only in that they are threatening to take care directly away from me and so many others, but also in that they clearly are not listening to the voices of my generation.”

The term “defunding” Planned Parenthood is a misnomer. There is no blank check that Planned Parenthood gets from the federal government, and it’s not in the budget. Instead, the legislation prevents millions of women who rely on Medicaid from accessing the health care provider they’ve been depending on for decades. This policy also has nothing to do with abortion -- it instead cuts women off from cancer screenings, birth control, and HIV and STI testing and treatment.

New polling shows that voters overwhelmingly support Planned Parenthood. Sixty-two percent of voters are opposed to defunding Planned Parenthood, while only 31 percent of voters support it. And when those voters are informed what “defunding” Planned Parenthood actually means, only 12 percent of voters support defunding Planned Parenthood, according to [Quinnipiac](#).

Planned Parenthood Arizona cares for over 33,000 people in Arizona each year.

**The Facts on Blocking Patients’ Access to Planned Parenthood:**

**FACT:** The term “defunding” Planned Parenthood is a [misnomer](#). There is no blank check that Planned Parenthood gets from the federal government, and it’s not a line item in the budget.

Instead, this type of legislation would prevent millions of women who rely on Medicaid or other federal programs from accessing the health care provider they've been able to rely on for decades. Federal law already blocks federal funds from going to abortion services. This legislation instead blocks people from accessing cancer screenings, birth control, HIV and STI testing, and other preventive and essential care at Planned Parenthood health centers.

**FACT:** Blocking access to Planned Parenthood hurts people in communities who are struggling to get by the most – especially those with low incomes and those living in areas with no other quality health care providers. Communities of color, immigrant communities, rural areas, young people, and the LGBTQ community, who already face structural barriers to accessing health care, are [disproportionately](#) impacted.

**FACT:** Other providers cannot just absorb Planned Parenthood's patient base if it is cut off from federal programs. Politicians who want to deny patients using Medicaid from going to Planned Parenthood often insist that other providers will fill the gap, but the experts at the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the National Partnership for Women & Families [said flat out: they can't](#). Even the executive director of the American Public Health Association has called such claims "[judicrous](#)."

**FACT:** "Defunding" was a health disaster in Texas. Two Texas public health [investigators](#) just wrote in the Washington Post that when Texas passed legislation it was devastating-- and shouldn't be repeated in the rest of the country. A significant number of women also lost or had reduced access to primary care providers as a consequence of blocking patients from accessing care at Planned Parenthood health centers.

**FACT:** When [lawmakers](#) in [Louisiana](#), [Ohio](#), and [Florida](#), tried to block access to Planned Parenthood in the past, they suggested women could go to "alternative" providers for reproductive health care, including dentists, food banks, nursing homes, ENTs, elementary schools, rehabs, and retirement homes.

**FACT:** [Fifty-four percent](#) of Planned Parenthood health centers are in health professional shortage areas, rural or medically underserved areas. Planned Parenthood health centers provide primary and preventive health care to many who otherwise would have nowhere to turn for care.

**FACT:** Although Planned Parenthood health centers comprised 10% of the country's safety net centers that offered family planning care in [2010](#), [they served 36% of patients](#) served by such centers. In 21 percent of counties with a Planned Parenthood health center, Planned Parenthood is the only safety-net family planning provider; and in 68 percent of counties with a Planned Parenthood health center, Planned Parenthood serves at least half of all safety-net family planning patients.

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*Planned Parenthood's advocacy and political arm in Arizona, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Arizona (PPAA), is the state's largest nonpartisan advocacy organization dedicated to protecting access to women's health care. PPAA is fighting for every woman's freedom and right to make reproductive choices, enjoy sexual health and wellbeing, and build healthy, strong families.*

[advocatesaz.org](http://advocatesaz.org)