

Statement in defense of Planned Parenthood against recent attacks from extremist Republicans from Mary Kay Henry, President of SEIU - A 2.1 million member union and the largest healthcare union in the country.



SEIU: Extremist Republicans' Attack on Women, Planned Parenthood Could Put Lives at Risk

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - In response to planned votes in Congress designed to defund Planned Parenthood, Mary Kay Henry, President of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), issued the following statement:

“We have seen attacks on working families in state after state, but now the extremist wing of the Republican Party has chosen a new target - women.

“Planned Parenthood is an essential part of our nation's healthcare system, yet a handful of ideologically-driven Members of Congress want to prevent millions of American women from receiving life-saving healthcare. Since its formation, Planned Parenthood has been a leader in providing access to services such as cancer screenings, annual exams and other important preventive services. Every dollar in federal funding goes toward preventive care. Simply put, Planned Parenthood saves lives.

“This mean-spirited attack on women's health is at odds with our values as a nation. The sensible, rational majority of Congress should vote against this extreme attack on women.”

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With 2.2 million members in Canada, the United States and Puerto Rico, SEIU is the fastest-growing union in the Americas. Focused on uniting workers in healthcare, public services and property services, SEIU members are winning better wages, health-care and more secure jobs for our communities, while uniting their strength with their counterparts around the world to help ensure that workers--not just corporations and CEOs--benefit from today's global economy.

A poem from the staff at Planned Parenthood who have formed a union...



*Family planning for all
It's our job and our call*

*Your contributions are outstanding
They keep our clinics running and expanding*

Together we bring the mission to life.

To keep doing the work for our patients and community

We need what's enough to support our families in security.

For ourselves and our patients, we want a stronger voice

That's why we're pro-union & pro-choice.

pro-choice pro-union

*I*n 2011, over 160 PPCW staff voted overwhelmingly to form a union with SEIU Local 49. The group of members includes staff throughout the region: Licensed Clinicians, Clinic Assistants, Billers, Call Center staff, Educators and more.

SEIU members have partnered with Planned Parenthood for many years -- most recently playing a crucial role in the fight to protect Planned Parenthood funding at the national level and the right to choose in Oregon.

Top staff priorities for improvement at PPCW through their union contract are:

- o Improving staff retention*
by securing a voice for workers, respect for their need for work-life balance, and improved wages and benefits.
- o Having a voice on the job*
Creating new processes for sharing information and decision-making between management and staff.
- o Establishing a fair wage system*

*M*ost PPCW employees are willing to make sacrifices in the form of below market wages and benefits because we believe in the work our organization does in the community. However, PPCW has not given an across-the-board wage increase in more than three years. During that time, PPCW has discontinued both the short-term disability program that had served as a maternity leave program and all contributions to a retirement plan.

This is a challenging time for all of us, but we believe that improving staff wages and benefits will pay off for PPCW: It will allow PPCW to retain staff longer, strengthen our ability to deliver high quality care, reduce training-related expenses, and improve PPCW's income from patient services.

We are committed to the well-being of PPCW and our patients and to being good stewards of the contributions you make. ***We appreciate your support as we work to reach a contract that helps make PPCW the best in service to our patients and our community and a respectful employer of staff.***

If you would like more information please visit us online
www.seiu49.org