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Press Release

US Court Rules Against the State of Texas: 25,000 North Texans' health care No longer in Jeopardy

Court states, requirements that "frustrate [Planned Parenthood's] ability to receive federal funds" are not permissible

NEW ORLEANS – The United States Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit ruled that the State of Texas illegally denied federal funds for family planning agencies including Planned Parenthood of North Texas (PPNT), in a move that would leave more than 25,000 North Texans with no other accessible health care.

"We are naturally pleased but not surprised by the court's ruling because the state law clearly violated federal law," PPNT Vice-President of Community Relations, Kathryn Allen said. "It is unfortunate Texas Legislators with a personal and partisan agenda went so far as to waste tax payers money, waste the state and federal courts' time and put more than 25,000 North Texans' only source of health care in jeopardy. The authors of the bill knew it was an unconstitutional law while they were writing it and lobbying it."

The lawsuit was initiated by PPNT and five other Planned Parenthood affiliates against the State of Texas when Rider 8 was included in the state Appropriations bill. Rider 8 prohibits any federal family planning funding from going to organizations that also provide abortions through private funds. 98% of PPNT patients are seeking basic reproductive medical care; only 2% are seeking abortions.

The court also ruled it would not be illegal to require that the abortion services be further separated from the family planning program funded by the state as a condition of eligibility for the program. The State of Texas will have to decide on any separation guidelines for eligibility.

PPNT's 28 clinics serve low- income patients in 57 counties and provide breast cancer screening, cervical cancer screening and treatment, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, birth control education, contraceptives, HIV testing and counseling, pregnancy testing and options counseling, screenings for hypertension, anemia, diabetes and cholesterol, midlife services for menopausal women, mammography and services for men including vasectomies.

If PPNT were stripped of its federal funding, residents in Collin, Cooke, Ellis, Kaufman, Lamar, Navarro and Smith counties would have to travel to other counties to receive family planning health care.



In the past year, North Texans have been subjected to several attempts to limit their access to reproductive health care. A Denton pharmacist refused to fill a rape victim's prescription for emergency contraception and a North Richland Hills pharmacist refused to fill a wife and mother's prescription for birth control pills.

Planned Parenthood is the oldest and largest family planning organization in the United States. In 2004, PPNT clinics provided more than 82,000 clients with medical services. Planned Parenthood provides more cervical cancer screenings than any other entity in the state.