



Recognizing Attacks on Abortion Care as a Public Health Emergency, Strengthening and Uniting Public Health Voices for Reproductive Justice

November, 2014

The American Public Health Association (APHA) and international human rights covenants recognize individuals' rights to choose whether and when to have children and how many children to have, to have the information and means to do so, to make these decisions free of coercion, discrimination and violence, and to attain the highest standard of reproductive and sexual health.

However, U.S. and state policies since 2010 increasingly obstruct access to sexual and reproductive health care, with a focus on abortion care, coercing women to carry unintended pregnancies to term. New restrictions on funding for abortions from both public and private sources compound the damage of the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits federal funding for abortions in the U.S., including through Medicaid; and the Helms Amendment, which restricts federal funds for abortions internationally.

These policies discriminate against women, and undermine public health, Evidence includes:

- [Sharp disparities](#) in unintended pregnancies and births in the U.S. by race/ethnicity, income, and location
- [Lower funding for women's and children's health services, and worse population health outcomes](#), in states where anti-abortion campaigns have prevailed.
- [Blocked access to comprehensive reproductive health services internationally](#) due to the Helms Amendment, undermining the ability of countries to adequately address maternal mortality and morbidity

PLEASE TAKE ACTION!

Sign below and email to: ershafter@twsr.org

- I support a public health emergency response to advance access to the full range of sexual and reproductive health care services, including safe, legal abortion care, for the health of women and populations; for economic equality and social justice; and as a key for individual freedom.
- The Hyde Amendment and the Helms Amendment must be permanently defeated to realize these benefits, and to reverse efforts to stigmatize abortion and intimidate advocates.
- I encourage my colleagues, including APHA section/caucus/SPIG/Forum and/or Affiliate, if any, to support a public health emergency response, including educating our members.

Name _____

Email address _____

APHA section/caucus/SPIG/Forum and/or Affiliate, if any: _____