

The Population Institute Releases its 2013 Report Card on Reproductive Health and Rights



U.S. overall receives a “C-” for second year in a row

Only 17 states receive a “B-” or higher; 13 states receive a failing grade.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Population Institute today released its second annual report card on reproductive health and rights in the U.S., and the results were not encouraging. Thirteen states receive a failing grade, and the U.S. as a whole received a “C-.” In releasing the report card, Robert Walker, the organization’s President, said, “This year we have seen a lot of victories at the national level, but with states limiting the full scope of that progress. The major victories include: HHS ruling that Plan B One Step be made available over the counter without an age restriction, the Affordable Care Act giving women access to family planning services without a co-pay requirement, and expanded Medicaid eligibility ensuring that millions more women would be eligible to access reproductive health services. Unfortunately, at the state level, attacks on reproductive health care have continued unabated and twenty five states have refused to expand their Medicaid program denying millions of women access to health care.”

While Congress has rejected efforts by social conservatives to de-fund family planning programs, several states are drastically reducing their funding for family planning and restricting funding to Planned Parenthood and other providers of contraceptive services. Walker warned that, “While opposition to abortion is driving these political assaults, putting family planning clinics out of business will only increase the number of unwanted pregnancies and, as a consequence, the number of abortions being performed.”

Using nine criteria, the Institute’s report card ranked each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia:

- Thirty percent of the grade is based on measures of effectiveness. This includes the latest available data on the teenage pregnancy rate (15%) and the rate of unintended pregnancies (15%).
- Twenty percent of the grade is based upon prevention. This includes mandated comprehensive sex education in the schools (15%) and access to emergency contraception (5%).
- Thirty percent of the grade is based upon affordability. This includes if states are expanding Medicaid under the Affordable

Care Act (10%), Medicaid eligibility rules for family planning (10%), and funding for family planning clinics serving low-income families (10%).

- The final twenty percent of the grade is based upon clinic access. This includes abortion restrictions (10%) and percent of women living in a county without an abortion provider (10%).

Based upon their scores, each state received a “core” grade (A, B, C, D or F), but some states received an additional “plus” or a “minus” for factors not reflected in the core grade, such as pending changes or legislation.

Only seventeen states received a B- or higher. Just four states (California, Maryland, Oregon and Washington) received an “A”. Oregon received the highest composite score. Thirteen states received a failing grade (“F”). States receiving a failing grade included Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

Walker said, “The Affordable Care Act this year should have produced a nationwide improvement in access to reproductive health care services, but 25 states have refused to expand their Medicaid coverage leaving millions without increased access to services. It is imperative that people who care about reproductive health and rights know what states are doing in terms of expanded Medicaid eligibility.”

In issuing the report, Walker warned that the status of reproductive health and rights in many states is under continuing assault. According to the Guttmacher Institute states have enacted 106 provisions relating to reproductive health including abortion, family planning funding, and sex education in just the first six months of 2013. While the assault on women’s reproductive health may be losing some momentum at the state level, Walker warned that, “Reproductive health advocates must remain ever vigilant.”

For a copy of the report, including a state-by-state breakdown, visit the Population Institute’s website www.populationinstitute.org/reportcard. For questions about the report, call Jennie Wetter, Director of Public Policy, at (202) 544-3300, ext. 108.

A special thanks to the Guttmacher Institute whose research made this report card possible.



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