



U.S. Maintains Grade at a “D-”

19 States Get Failing Grade Amid Continued Attacks on Reproductive Health and Rights

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Population Institute released its seventh annual *50 State Report Card on Reproductive Health and Rights* today. The grade for the U.S. as a whole remains at a “D-” in this year’s report card, but there are number of looming threats to reproductive health and rights emanating out of the nation’s capital. In particular, the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court could have an adverse impact on future court decisions regarding access to family planning and abortion services. At the state level, 26 states received a “D” or lower, with 19 states receiving a failing grade. The report card, the most comprehensive of its kind, tracks multiple indicators of reproductive health and rights, including access to family planning and abortion services.

The Institute’s president Robert Walker said, “Last year we said that the country was quickly becoming ‘The Divided States of Reproductive Health and Rights’ and that trend, unfortunately, continues. A woman’s ability to access affordable reproductive health care increasingly depends on where she lives and the Trump administration’s reshaping of the federal judiciary could accelerate that trend.”

THE NATIONAL GRADE

For the second year in a row, the U.S., as a whole, received a “D-”. While federal law and federal funding levels remain largely unchanged, new threats emerged in 2018:

Title X

In a move that jeopardizes the future status of family planning clinics receiving Title X funding, the Trump administration last year drafted a proposed rule that would deny funding to family planning clinics that provide clients with information about the availability of abortion services. The so-called “domestic gag rule” could cut off funding to many of the existing providers,

including—but not limited to—Planned Parenthood.

The ACA’s Contraceptive ‘Mandate’

The Trump administration finalized regulatory changes to the Affordable Care Act, which would allow employers with “religious” or “moral” objections to drop coverage of contraception in the health insurance policies provided to their employees.

Conservative Court Appointments

In addition to the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. Senate has confirmed dozens of Trump-nominated judges to the lower courts, raising

concerns that the federal courts will curb access to reproductive health care in the U.S.

STATE GRADES

Ten states (California, Washington, D.C., Hawaii, Maryland, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington) received an “A” in this year’s report. The 19 states receiving a failing grade in 2018 included Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

In releasing this year’s 50-State report card, Walker noted that “This year’s report card reflects the fact that reproductive health and rights remain under critical assault at the state and federal levels. It also demonstrates, once again, there is a growing divide between those states that put a high importance on reproductive health and rights and those that do not. While the reproductive health advocates scored significant victories in the 2018 elections, the war on reproductive rights is far from over.”

"It is urgent that everyone concerned about the state of reproductive health and rights in the U.S. pay attention to what is happening at the national and local level and speak out against attacks on access to affordable reproductive health care. Only by fighting back against these attacks can we ensure that no one's ability to access reproductive health care depends on where they live."

METHODOLOGY

Using eleven 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-five percent of the grade is based upon **prevention**. This includes mandated comprehensive sex education in

the schools (15%), access to emergency contraception (5%), and minors' access to contraceptive services (5%).

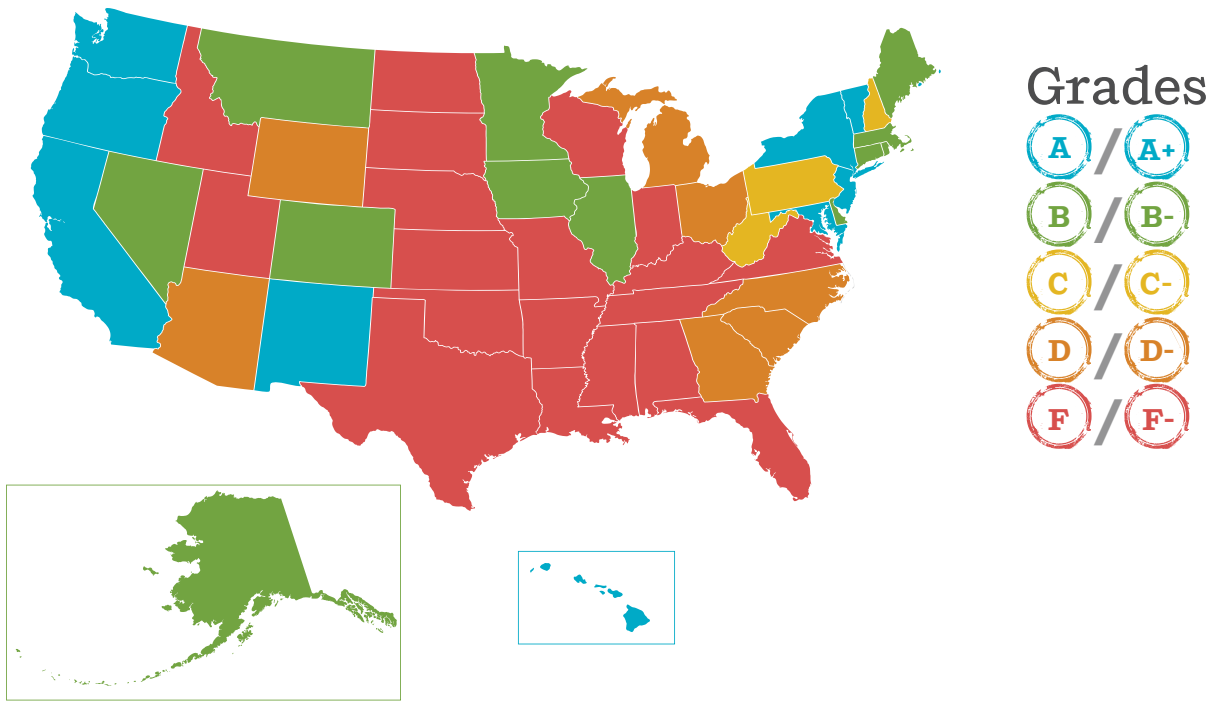
- Twenty-five percent of the grade is based upon **affordability**. This includes if states are expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (15%), Medicaid eligibility rules for family planning (5%), and restrictions of insurance coverage of abortion (5%).

- The final 20 percent of the grade is based upon clinic **access**. This includes abortion restrictions (10%), TRAP Laws (5%), and percent of women living in a county without an abortion provider (5%).

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.

FINAL GRADE:

If there are noteworthy developments or other important policies that are not reflected in the state's "core" grade, a state may be accorded a plus (+) or a minus (-), depending on how the changes are likely to impact reproductive health and rights.



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.

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