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21 Attorneys General Challenge New Title X Restrictions on Women's Reproductive Health Care

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors, joined a coalition of 21 State Attorneys General today in filing a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of a new Title X “Gag Rule” that will significantly restrict access to reproductive health services and information for women and families. The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court in Eugene, Oregon and is led by Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum and New York Attorney General Letitia James.

The complaint can be found [here](#). Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the American Medical Association also today filed a parallel lawsuit in the U.S. District Court in Eugene, Oregon.

The rule relates to funding for Title X, the only federal grant program that funds family planning programs to help patients access contraception, breast and cervical cancer screenings, well-woman exams, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, and other related health services.

“We joined this litigation because the regulations are unconstitutional, were enacted illegally and without any evidentiary basis,” said Attorney General Connors. “These new rules would, if implemented, directly harm Hawaii families, particularly women, by limiting their access to quality comprehensive health care. The changes would significantly decrease funding for medical services to uninsured, under-insured, and low-income individuals.”

The lawsuit filed today alleges that the Title X rule, if implemented, would reduce access and erode the quality of reproductive health care that Title X was originally intended to provide for low income individuals. The new rule would also

interfere with the health care provider and patient relationship, by limiting what a doctor can say to a patient.

Under the new rule issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, providers in any clinic that receives Title X funding will be barred from referring a patient for an abortion (even if she requests that information), and in many circumstances even discussing an abortion with a patient. The new rule also mandates a referral for prenatal care for every pregnant patient, regardless of the needs or the wishes of the patient.

Joining Hawaii in the lawsuit led by Oregon and New York are Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and Wisconsin.

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