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Hawaii Attorney General Joins Multistate Amicus Brief Supporting Baltimore's Challenge to the Title X Rule

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors joined a multistate coalition led by California and Nevada in filing an amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, supporting the City of Baltimore in its lawsuit against the federal government's Title X rule. The new rule restricts access to critical preventive reproductive healthcare by prohibiting doctors from providing complete information to patients about their family planning options and from referring patients for abortion services. In the brief, the 22-state coalition (plus the District of Columbia) explains that the new rule endangers the health, well-being, and economic security of its residents, leaving patients in entire regions and states nationwide without providers. The coalition urges the Court to uphold a lower court ruling halting implementation of the Title X rule.

"The new rule is based on a flawed legal interpretation that will limit important medical services," said Attorney General Connors. "It does not improve the healthcare challenges our community faces during the COVID-19 pandemic."

The Title X family planning program is instrumental in the states' efforts to deliver preventative and reproductive healthcare to low-income women and families. Over the last 50 years, Title X has created a strong network of medical providers committed to delivering high-quality, evidence-based preventive health services. Prior to 2019, the Title X program funded a wide array of critical public health services, including family planning counseling, access to FDA-approved contraceptive methods, pelvic exams, and crucial screenings for high blood pressure, anemia, diabetes, sexually transmitted diseases and infections, and cervical and breast cancer. The federal government's new Title X Rule, however, has harmed the Title X program nationwide.

Since the new Title X Rule went into effect, the states' Title X programs have been upended, with many qualified providers leaving the program. In 13 states, more than 50 percent of Title X grantees have withdrawn from the program, and several states no longer have any Title X providers. Further, new providers have not filled the gap caused

by the withdrawals. As a result, states have faced increased burdens to meet residents' needs for essential healthcare. In Hawaii, the number of Title X funded contracts has gone from 9 clinics to 0, causing a 70 percent reduction in statewide family planning services, with at least 11,200 fewer clients served this year.

The coalition also notes that in light of the recent pandemic, clinic withdrawals from the Title X program place an additional strain on health systems nationwide. Due to COVID-19, many people have lost insurance coverage or are experiencing financial instability due to unemployment and could benefit from Title X's low-cost services.

Attorney General Connors joined the attorneys general of California, Nevada, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

A copy of the amicus brief is available [here](#).

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