

July 10, 2018



Image courtesy of Population Media Center

Family Planning Is a Human Right - Right?

Population Media Center

This article was originally published by [Population Media Center](#) on July 3, 2018

On July 11th, 2018, concerned citizens and global advocates will celebrate World Population Day. This annual event was designed [to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues](#). This year, the theme for World Population Day will be "[Family Planning is a Human Right](#)."

The choice of this year's theme is excellent because 2018 marks both the 20th anniversary of Population Media Center (an organization that has promoted family planning since our inception) -- and the 50th anniversary of the 1968 International Conference on Human Rights. The outcome document of this historical gathering affirmed that "**Parents have a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children.**"

In other words, the conference affirmed ***family planning as a human right***.

Unfortunately, this important anniversary and supposed day of celebration are taking place in the context of failed leadership by the United States - leadership that is purposefully subverting the human right to family planning, both at home and abroad. Indeed, **the Trump administration continues to show pure antipathy towards sexual and reproductive health and rights all around the world.**

When it comes to birth control, family planning, and contraception it would be hard to imagine a worse administration than this one. First, Trump reinstated the deadly Global Gag Rule, an ideologically driven executive order that halted U.S. assistance for overseas family planning programs that use *non-U.S. government funding* to provide abortion services, information, or counseling. The real world result of this decision is that **family planning programs and the communities they serve around the world have been financially devastated** - more than a few have been forced [to stop providing all services](#).

To add insult to injury, **Trump then terminated all funding for the United Nation's Population Fund**, a major supplier of contraceptive services to women in the developing world.

Not merely content to harm human health and well-being overseas, however, the **Trump administration is also doing all it can to reduce or eliminate support for contraception in the United States**. For example, in 2017, the Trump administration issued a ruling letting health insurers and private employers refuse to provide birth control insurance coverage to their employees if doing so went against their religious beliefs or moral convictions.

More recently, **Trump decided to use the health and well-being of around 4 million low-income reproductive health patients as political pawns**. Trump has proposed [barring Title X family planning funds from programs](#) and facilities that perform abortions. To be clear, Title X is the only federal grant program dedicated solely to providing individuals with comprehensive family planning services. Also, to be clear, there is a law in place [called the Hyde Amendment](#) which prohibits federal funds to be used to pay for abortion. Hence, it is [the world's worst kept secret](#) that the real reason Trump has adopted this tactic is to financially knee-cap Planned Parenthood facilities. And - wait for it - the [main reasons](#) people visit a Planned Parenthood are **contraceptive access** (31%) and STI/STD testing and treatment (45%). Trump clearly thirsts for the hijacking of public policy by anti-choice ideology - in order to harvest accolades from his political base if successful.

Sorry folks, but this is **RIDICULOUS!**

With this failed leadership in mind and our sights firmly set on a better future, Population Media Center, a nonprofit charity with a mission to address the interconnected issues of the full rights of women and girls, population, and the environment, is organizing the **#RidiculousRight?** campaign. This awareness campaign will be centered around World Population Day, on July 11th.

Please sign-up to actively participate on July 11th. You can:

1. Help engage people across the United States, and the whole world, by sharing content.
2. Officially weigh-in on the proposed Title X rule changes.

We'll provide you with a social media kit, including memes (some humorous, some serious); example Tweets and Facebook posts; and top quality educational resources on these important issues.

The MAHB Blog is a venture of the Millennium Alliance for Humanity and the Biosphere. Questions should be directed to joan@mahbonline.org

MAHB Blog: <https://mahb.stanford.edu/blog/family-planning-right/>