

Nov. 12, 2009

## IT'S NOT OVER YET: Health Care Reform & Women's Health

The devastating Stupak-Pitts Amendment to the House Health Reform bill reveals that politics matters more than women's lives, health and consciences. Stupak would ban abortion coverage under any plan in the public option and puts an unprecedented restriction on people who pay for their own health insurance. Furthermore, Stupak-Pitts creates a new provision *allowing* discrimination against those who pay for, refer for, or provide abortion!

### LOCATIONS:

1401-A Martin Luther King Jr Way  
TACOMA, WA 98405  
253-473-6031

4300 Talbot Rd S #403  
RENTON, WA 98055  
425-255-0471

106 East E Street  
YAKIMA, WA 98901  
509-575-6422

Cedar River Clinics provides abortion, birth control and well woman care for 8000 women annually. We are a non-profit organization with a mission to achieve reproductive freedom so women may decide their destinies.

We have a vision of a world where all women freely make their own decisions regarding their bodies, reproduction, and sexuality — a world where women can fulfill their own unique potential and live healthy whole lives.

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**The Stupak-Pitts Amendment is devastating** because it greatly expands the number of people who will be *denied* abortion coverage and makes the denial a *permanent* part of health insurance law, whereas the Hyde Amendment abortion ban is added each year to the Medicaid appropriations bill and there is the potential to repeal it. The Hyde Amendment creates a two-tier system and discriminates against low-income women by denying coverage for abortion in the Medicaid program putting their health at risk. Hyde-like amendments deny abortion coverage for federal employees, women in the military and military families, women relying on Indian Health Services. Hyde has long been a travesty against low-income young pregnant women. Stupak extends a denial of abortion coverage to millions more women. Stupak and his supporters want to outlaw all abortion, this is just one of their strategies. The Stupak Amendment must be stopped.

The Stupak-Pitts Amendment was added to satisfy the Catholic Bishops. **We who support health care reform must tell Congress: the bishops cannot be allowed to derail reform by imposing their political viewpoint on all women.**

**Pregnancy decisions belong to women, not to Congress.** Without access to abortion care, there is no choice. **Who are the women?** The people most negatively impacted by the Stupak Amendment are low-and-middle income young women for whom health care reform has potential to increase access; many of them are women of color. Another group of women who will face financially impossible situations are the ones in need of higher cost procedures: when a fatal fetal diagnosis is discovered in mid-pregnancy and removal of the fetus costs thousands of dollars. Carrying a fetus that is dying or will die at or soon after birth is an untenable option. These situations are traumatic, and being denied appropriate care by the insurance plan that is supposed to help adds insult to financial and emotional distress. Paying out of pocket is beyond the reach for so many women who must literally choose between food for their children and getting health care for themselves. Government cannot and should not judge which abortions are covered and which are not. Health care reform legislation must place the decision into women's hands and let them use their own morals, spirituality, cultural background, and understanding when they make their decisions.

**As attention turns to the U.S. Senate, we urge Senators to keep women's private abortion decisions out of health reform. Ensure that the final bill does not contain the Stupak-Pitts abortion ban, and does contain a public option. CALL 202-224-3121 to speak to your two Senators' offices. And, email the White House at [www.whitehouse.gov/contact](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact)**

**Pregnancy decisions belong to women. ONE in THREE** American women has an abortion in her lifetime. Instead of hateful assaults, we need to *increase* access to accessible affordable comprehensive reproductive care. Women's futures are at stake.

- [www.rhrealitycheck.org/blog/2009/11/09/why-the-stupak-amendment-is-a-monumental-setback-for-abortion-access](http://www.rhrealitycheck.org/blog/2009/11/09/why-the-stupak-amendment-is-a-monumental-setback-for-abortion-access)
- [www.womensenews.org/story/health/091108/democrats-health-bill-victory-tramples-choice](http://www.womensenews.org/story/health/091108/democrats-health-bill-victory-tramples-choice)
- [www.thenation.com/blogs/notion/494751/the\\_stupak\\_stupor](http://www.thenation.com/blogs/notion/494751/the_stupak_stupor)
- [www.motherjones.com/politics/2009/11/price-health-reform-abortion-rights](http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2009/11/price-health-reform-abortion-rights)