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## **GOVERNOR AND HOUSE AND SENATE LEADERSHIP WORK WITH DSHS TO SAVE COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICE FAMILY PLANNING NURSE PROGRAM**

*Reinstatement of this vital program retains millions in federal funding  
for family planning services*

The Governor's office along with House and Senate leadership have worked with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to reinstate the Community Service Office (CSO) Family Planning Nurse program through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. This program houses 70 nurses at all 58 CSOs statewide to provide vital family planning services. The program was scheduled to end on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Despite the six month contract renewal, many CSO family planning nurses have already been lost due to the contract terminations issued by DSHS in December when it announced it was eliminating the program.

Since the cut was announced, Planned Parenthood supporters from across the state have called, visited and emailed their legislators, and CSO Family Planning clients, like Elizet from Pasco (*Tri City Herald, January 18, 2009*), have reached out to Planned Parenthood and the media to tell their stories. "We are thankful that not only were the voices of supporters and clients heard—but that the Governor and leadership, along with DSHS, understand that it's common sense to provide family planning services that save over four dollars in pregnancy care costs for every dollar spent," says Elaine Rose, CEO of Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington.

In January 2009, the DSHS completely cut the family planning nurse program in CSOs throughout the state, despite the fact that every dollar the state spends on the CSO Family Planning Nurse program is matched with nine federal dollars. In cutting this program,

Washington State left \$11.37 million in federal funds on the table, and cost low-income Washingtonians \$12.63 million in essential family planning services.

On Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, DSHS announced that it would restore the program at least through the end of the current biennium, June 30<sup>th</sup> 2009, so that 14 years of wise investments in family planning services at CSO sites won't be lost just when more people than ever are facing economic hardship.

“We are grateful for the foresight, leadership, and strong sense of fiscal responsibility shown by the support of the Governor, as well as Speaker Frank Chopp and Senate Majority Leader Lisa Brown, for the Department of Social and Health Services reinstatement of this vital program which is a lifeline for many,” says Anna Franks, Board Chair of the Planned Parenthood Public Policy Network of Washington, “but we still have a lot of work to do to replace nurses that have already left, and make sure that this program is included in the 2009-2011 biennial budget.”

## **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Health and Human Services (DSHS) instituted the CSO Family Planning Nurse Program 14 years ago. The program funds nurses to provide family planning education, counseling, and birth control for recipients of DSHS and CSO services. DSHS made this discretionary cut in both their fiscal year 2009 Supplemental Budget as well as their budget for the next biennium. Washington State spent over \$333 million in state funded pregnancy care costs in 2008, and approximately half of those pregnancies were unintended. Nearly half of all births in Washington today are paid for by Medicaid. Washington State saves \$4.39 for every dollar spent on family planning services.

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Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington protects and advances reproductive health and rights in Washington on behalf of the five Planned Parenthood affiliates in Washington. Collectively, the affiliates provide clinical and education services at 38 Planned Parenthood clinics in 18 counties around the state.