

# **Biden proposal will open taxpayer funds to abortion providers**

WASHINGTON (BP and special reports) – The administration of Democratic U.S. President Joe Biden is proposing new policies that will grant abortion providers access to taxpayer-provided family planning funds.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on April 15 published a proposed regulation that will rescind a policy left over from Biden's predecessor, Republican Donald Trump, known as the Protect Life Rule. Issued in 2019, the rule prohibits the use of money from the federal government's Title X family planning program "to perform, promote, refer for, or support abortion as a method of family planning."

The Protect Life Rule requires "clear financial and physical separation" between Title X programs and non-Title X programs in which abortion is promoted as a method of family planning. Biden, a strong advocate of abortion during all nine months of pregnancy, directed HHS in a Jan. 28 memorandum to consider immediately whether to repeal the Protect Life Rule.

The newly-proposed regulation, the product of that memorandum, will restore family planning funds to Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers that are presently ineligible under the current rule.

On April 12, the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) also announced that during the COVID-19 pandemic, it will not enforce the requirement that a woman must appear in person to receive mifepristone, also known as RU-486. It is the first pill in an oral two-step process known as medical or chemical abortion that is used at home to destroy and expel a developing baby without surgery.

The policy reversals are disappointing but not surprising to the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville and other pro-life organizations that supported the Trump administration rules.

“The decisions by the FDA and HHS are tragic, as they will only harm not only the lives of pre-born children but also the safety of their mothers,” ERLC President Russell Moore said in written comments. “The abortion industry, of course, always seeks a laissez-faire deregulation to remove even the most basic of regulations.

“As we already knew, we in the pro-life movement must always be ready to persuade our fellow Americans that every human life is worthy of protection, regardless of stage of development.”

Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), the country’s No. 1 abortion provider, applauded the new rules.

PPFA President Alexis McGill Johnson said, regarding what she labeled as the “Title X gag rule,” that the group is prepared to mobilize its partners and supporters “to swiftly end this discriminatory policy and to create a pathway for health care providers that were forced out by the gag rule to re-enter” the federal family planning program.

According to PPFA reports and filings, the non-profit/tax exempt organization takes in over 1.3 billion dollars each year and receives government funding annually in the range of \$618 million dollars.

Mississippi does not have an abortion clinic affiliated with Planned Parenthood, but several organizations refer women to PPFA out-of-state facilities. The sole abortion clinic in the state is the Jackson Women’s Health Organization on North State Street in Jackson.

In its proposed rule, HHS said Title X – which serves about

four million Americans, particularly those of low income – lost grantees and service sites after the Protect Life Rule was finalized. Immediately, Title X total grantees fell from 90 to 71.

Service sites dropped by more than 1,000 or about one-fourth, according to HHS. The department also said access by low-income, uninsured, and racial and ethnic minorities decreased. The rule may have led to an estimated 181,000 unintended pregnancies, HHS reported.

Americans have until May 17 to provide comments on the proposed HHS rule. For information on how to comment, click [here](#).