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**Billings Heights  
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**Billings West**

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March 16, 2007

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Good afternoon Chairman Sinrud and members of the Committee. My name is Kathy Wehri (spell out your last name) and I am the manager of Planned Parenthood's family planning services here in Helena. I have worked for Planned Parenthood for 20 years and have seen the gradual loss of funding for the Title X family planning services that we provide to our patients. I ask you to support HB 638 because contraceptive costs have increased dramatically since last summer and all of our services are in jeopardy.

Over 90% of Planned Parenthood's resources are used to prevent unintended pregnancies and therefore prevent abortion. Helena alone saw 1,818 family planning clients in 2006, 54% who qualified for free services. We provided 840 annual exams which include cervical cancer screenings and clinical breast exams, and 472 Chlamydia tests in 2006 – all important services that are provided to Title X clients in addition to them receiving their contraceptive supplies.

I can remember a (married? Older?) woman coming in to pick up her Birth Control Method and when we asked her if she could donate something towards that method she said "I need all of the money that I have right now to buy coats for my children." It was October and coats were a necessity. I can't imagine what she would have done if we were not here to provide her with her birth control method free of charge – no woman should be placed in the position of choosing between meeting her healthcare needs and providing for her children.

I hope everyone here understands how important the services we provide really are and ask themselves what will happen to all of the men and women who come into our clinics if our services or contraceptive supplies continue to be cut. Not only do we provide birth control, but all of the Title X Family Planning clinics are STD/HIV testing sites, and breast and cervical cancer screening sites. Please help us continue to provide services in our communities by providing this critical funding.

Thank you for listening and please vote "YES" on HB 638.

Thank you,  
Kathy Wehri