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**Critical to Pass Budget to Support Wisconsin Women's Health**  
*Passage of Women-Friendly Budget Key to State's Health*

Madison, WI – As Wisconsin remains the only state in the country which hasn't passed its state budget, health supporters are realizing the devastating consequences lurking as the state Assembly continues to resist a women-friendly, family-friendly budget.

The current budget stalemate has severe ramifications for access to health care in Wisconsin. There is much at stake for the tens of thousands of middle and low-income women who rely on publicly-funded health care services such as reproductive health care.

**REASONS TO PASS A BUDGET NOW FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH**

1. **Without a 2008-09 budget, the Department of Health and Family Services (DHFS) will be forced to slash Medicaid reimbursement rates and will have to reduce its Medicaid budget by \$61 million GPR each month, causing DHFS to lose over \$83 million in federal matching funds each month.**
2. **The budget stalemate threatens access to health care for the thousands who rely on the successful and cost effective federal-state partnership Medicaid programs that provide basic preventive health care.**
3. **Without a budget, family planning providers will see a 28% reduction in Medicaid reimbursements for services provided to low-income patients.**
4. **For family planning providers that have a patient base of nearly 68% Medicaid patients, that cut will be almost impossible to absorb, forcing health centers to cut back in staff and hours of services. This cut means:**
  - **Fewer women will have access to critical cervical and breast cancer screenings**
  - **Fewer women will have access to birth control counseling and services**
  - **Fewer women will have access to sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment**
  - **Fewer women will have access to crucial early identification of pregnancy and prenatal referrals**
5. **In dollar terms, the proposed Medicaid cuts would reduce funding for:**
  - **Medicaid family planning providers by \$117,983 each month without a budget**
  - **Medicaid family planning waiver providers by \$132,548 each month without a budget**
  - **Wisconsin Well Woman Program providers \$67,844 each month without a budget**
6. **Over 300,000 women in Wisconsin are in need of publicly-funded reproductive health services. Even with the existence of Wisconsin's current family planning spending, the state only serves about 95,000 of these women. The potential Medicaid cuts will drastically affect family planning providers' ability to serve this population.**

"There are real consequences when the Legislature fails to do its main job, which is to pass a new budget," stated WAWH Director Sara Finger. "This delay will cost taxpayers millions, as well as affect the health and well-being of too many Wisconsin women and their families. We must call on the Assembly to pass a budget now."

To learn more about the 2007 State Budget, visit [www.supportwomenshealth.org](http://www.supportwomenshealth.org).