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**Testimony to the State of Ohio Senate Committee on Government Oversight and Reform
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Chairman Coley, Vice Chair Seitz, Ranking member Yuko, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on House Bill 294.

My name is Mimi Rivard, I have been a Nurse Practitioner since 1992 and I've been an RN since 1988. I've worked at the AIDS Resource Center (ARC) AIDS Resource Center for 2 years. I have more than 20 years working with people who are HIV positive in mostly underserved, urban areas. (Bronx, Chicago and greater Boston)

On a personal note, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to go to Planned Parenthood as teenager for birth control. The providers I saw during that visit provided me with education and the care I needed. As a young woman from a working class, Catholic background, Planned Parenthood was the only resource available to me for sexual health. I believe I would not be where I am today without the empowerment and care provided to me during that visit.

The idea that Planned Parenthood should not receive funding today is short sighted at best. Planned Parenthood fills the gaps in women's health screening for malignancy, STI's and HIV. There are many rural areas in Central Ohio that do not currently offer HIV testing. Without Planned Parenthood, the likelihood of an outbreak of HIV (similar to the one we just experienced in Indiana) seems likely.

Removing Planned Parenthood as an HIV testing grant recipient would be putting public health risk. Testing and treatment are cornerstones of public health. Planned Parenthood is a safety net for many. Without this resource, people with limited access to care, those that are underserved and without financial resources and/or private insurance will lose their "safety net." By eliminating funding of this valuable asset to the community, we will be participating in the development of a 2 tiered system, where the most vulnerable go without.