

Testimony of Erika Boothman, MPH  
Medical Student at Ohio State University  
Opposing Senate Bill 214  
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My name is Erika Boothman. I am a fourth-year medical student at The Ohio State University College of Medicine and I am specializing in obstetrics and gynecology. I studied Biology in undergraduate at the University of Michigan and I hold a Masters in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University.

I am a member of the Ohio State University Medical Students for Choice and I am here to speak in opposition of Senate Bill 214.

Last year, I taught a sex education class to thirty low-income seventh grade students, all of whom were African American. These girls knew astonishingly little about their body; many of them did not know basic male and female anatomy or the pubertal changes that were already happening with their bodies. These young people were at high risk of sexual abuse and coercion into sexual activity.

During one of the sessions, we asked the girls if they knew where they could go for STD and pregnancy testing, annual well-woman checkups, resources for intimate partner violence, and condoms. Although the area in which I was teaching had a university hospital with an adolescent clinic and multiple free-standing non-Planned Parenthood clinics, every single girl answered the question with a confident “Planned Parenthood!”

Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio spent 98% of their 2014 budget on well-woman visits, HIV/STI screening, cancer screenings, and contraception.<sup>1</sup>

Sexually transmitted diseases disproportionately affect minority women. The Ohio Department of Health’s 2013 STD Surveillance Program reported that although black women ages 15-24 made up only 1% of the Ohio population, they accounted for 21% of chlamydia infections and 25% of the gonorrhea infections in 2012.<sup>2</sup> Not only are sexually transmitted infections a health issue, they are clearly a race issue.

By cutting funding to Planned Parenthood, you would be restricting health care access to the most marginalized people in Ohio. Defunding an organization that served nearly 80,000 Ohioans last year would disproportionately affect girls like the ones I taught.<sup>1</sup> These are not girls who can simply call up their primary care doctor, have their mother drive them to their appointment, and direct the bill to insurance. Many of Planned Parenthood’s patients are marginalized. Many of them are African American. Many of them are below the poverty line. This bill is not targeting abortion; Ohio and federal law already forbids that.<sup>3,4</sup> This is about the other 98% of Planned Parenthood’s budget. This bill is targeting women who already have minimal access to healthcare. This bill targets individuals like those seventh grade girls I taught. Senate Bill 214 discriminates both against low-income women and African American women and I urge you to vote against it. Thank you.

## References

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<sup>1</sup> Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio 2013-2014 Program Report. Katie Chatas, Board of Directors.

Downloaded from: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-greater-ohio>

<sup>2</sup> Ohio Department of Health STD Surveillance Program 2013. “Chlamydia and Gonorrhea Infections Among 15-24 Year Olds”

Downloaded from: <https://www.odh.ohio.gov/healthstats/disease/std/std1.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> State Fundings of Abortion Under Medicaid,

Downloaded from: <http://kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/abortion-under-medicaid/>

<sup>4</sup> ACLU Public Funding for Abortion

Downloaded from: <https://www.aclu.org/public-funding-abortion>