

This White House seems to want good politics, not good policy. Officials in this administration have said they want to make electricity rates skyrocket, and they want to make examples out of people who get in the way. They are tired of having to work with the Congress the people elected. That is why the administration is now trying to impose these deeply regressive regulations—regulations that may be illegal, won't meaningfully impact the global environment, and will likely harm middle and lower class Americans the most—by executive fiat. It represents a triumph of blind ideology over sound policy and honest compassion.

In Kentucky, these regulations would likely mean fewer jobs, shuttered powerplants, and higher electricity costs for families and businesses. I am not going to sit by while the White House takes aim at the lifeblood of our State's economy. I am going to keep doing everything I can to fight them.

#### PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the revelations we have seen from Planned Parenthood are deeply disturbing. They raise fundamental questions about what kind of society we want to be, so I want to thank Senators ERNST, PAUL, LANKFORD, and a number of others, for accepting my invitation to lead the effort on the Senate's response.

The legislation they worked to develop is all about restoring America's commitment to care and to compassion. It would fund women's health, not Planned Parenthood, and we will take a vote to advance it tonight. Instead of subsidizing a political group, this bill would protect Federal funding for health services for women. Instead of subsidizing a political group, this bill would ensure funds continue to flow to community health centers and hospitals that provide more comprehensive health services and may have many more facilities nationwide. Instead of subsidizing a political group, this bill would help women receive health services, such as screenings, prenatal and post-natal care, well-child care, diagnostic laboratory and radiology services, immunizations, and other care they need. That is a true commitment to women's health. That is real compassion.

I know Democrats have relied on Planned Parenthood as an ally recently, but they must be moved by the horrifying images we have all seen. They must be shocked by the utter lack of compassion that has been on display. They must care about women's health as much as they care about some scandal-plagued political organization. That is why tonight I am asking them to truly reflect on what is important. I am asking them not to block this funding for women's health just to protect some political group mired in scandal. Women deserve better, and our country deserves better.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, here is an excerpt from an article in the Republican leader's hometown newspaper, the Louisville Courier-Journal:

Sara Hall started going to Planned Parenthood when she was in her late teens and needed birth control, and she's gotten care there ever since.

Without them, "I wouldn't have a doctor to see. I don't know where I would have gone. It would have meant I wouldn't get the care I needed."

Like Sara, millions of American women depend on Planned Parenthood for much needed health services. Every year, Planned Parenthood helps women, just like Sara, get the important services they need, such as birth control measures, but it is more than just birth control.

Here are a few of the health services Planned Parenthood provides to American women, and they did it, for example, in 2013. Half a million women went to Planned Parenthood for breast cancer screening, 400,000 women received a cervical exam from Planned Parenthood's medical staff, and 4.5 million treatments and tests for sexually transmitted diseases and infections were performed. Yet, here we are once again, faced with another Republican attempt to limit women's access to health care.

A few hours from now, the Senate will vote on a Republican bill to defund Planned Parenthood. Let's understand what that vote means. Defunding Planned Parenthood would limit American women's access to critical health services, such as contraception, breast and cancer screenings, and well-women visits. This legislation is just another Republican attack on the health care of millions of women, like Sara from Kentucky.

Over the past few months, Republicans have worked to trick American women into believing Republicans don't want to limit women's access to contraceptives or other critical health services provided by Planned Parenthood, but votes like the one we are going to take in a couple of hours lay bare the truth. The cold, hard fact is that a vote to defund Planned Parenthood is a vote to limit women's access to cancer screenings, contraceptives, and other important services that Planned Parenthood provides.

Our Nation is already facing a shortage of primary care providers. For many women, Planned Parenthood is their preferred medical provider. One in five American women will go to Planned Parenthood for services at some time during their lives. Defunding Planned Parenthood and reducing the number of providers available for women to receive contraceptives and other critical health services

would reduce women's access to good health, and more importantly, their access to care, which is very direct and to the point.

To put it another way, the demand for care would still exist, but there would be fewer providers to render this care. And for many women, Planned Parenthood may be the only provider where they can seek medical help. Republicans are trying to eliminate their access to health centers.

Last Thursday, I listened to the senior Senator from Texas, where he claimed this bill we are going to vote on soon would actually increase access to care for women. I am surprised this distinguished Member of the Senate, a longtime member of the Texas Supreme Court, would say something like that.

He and other Republicans believe, I guess, that clinics like community health centers will pick up the slack should Planned Parenthood be defunded. That is simply not true. I am a strong supporter of community health centers. It is part of ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act, because I believe in community health centers. We put billions of dollars in that bill, and during the years it has been in existence, it has done so much to provide help for community health centers, but we still have far, far much to do. There are not enough community health centers, even with what we have done, to increase their ability to meet the current demand. To throw in a few more women who have been knocked out of Planned Parenthood—and "a few" is a pejorative term; it would be millions of women—is wrong.

The director of women's health policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation says: "Across the nation, Community health centers are already at capacity."

Take a look, for example, at the assistant Republican leader's home State of Texas. A recent report from George Washington University detailed what it would take for other providers to replace Planned Parenthood—exactly what the senior Senator from Texas has suggested.

For example, in Midland County, TX, there would have to be an increase of 537 percent by non-Planned Parenthood clinics, if Planned Parenthood is defunded. Lubbock County would see an increase of 250 percent. Community health centers cannot handle that, nor can they handle that increase in heavily populated Dallas County, where it would be an almost 200-percent increase.

What the Republican legislation does is makes it nearly impossible for women who need medical attention to get the care they need. If women cannot go get health care from Planned Parenthood, where do they go?

Take a look at what happened in the State of Indiana in 2011, when that State's legislature voted to deny State funding for Planned Parenthood health centers. Republicans then argued that