

PROTECTING ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE AND SUPPORTING INCREASED FUNDING LEVELS

WHEREAS, women need access to safe, affordable, and comprehensive reproductive health care throughout their lives, including screening for cancer and sexually transmitted infections, contraceptive services, abortion care, prenatal care, and labor and delivery services; and

WHEREAS, reproductive health is a vital component of a woman's overall health, and reproductive freedom is vital to a woman's safety, well-being, and ability to participate equally in society; and

WHEREAS, on January 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a historic and landmark decision, ruled in *Roe v. Wade* that the U.S. Constitution safeguards a woman's ability to make her own personal medical decisions about when or whether to have children; and

WHEREAS, that decision has allowed women to participate more fully in society, saved lives, and strengthened families and we must always guard against efforts to deliberately erode the availability and affordability of abortion and undermine the protections provided by *Roe v. Wade*; and

WHEREAS, the majority of Americans continue to support safe, legal abortion; and

WHEREAS, federal and state laws that place obstacles in the paths of women seeking abortion care take away the ability of those women to make decisions and threaten the health of families; and

WHEREAS, one such restriction is the Hyde Amendment, passed by Congress on September 30, 1976, which for nearly 39 years has impeded access to abortion care for low-income women enrolled in Medicaid; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid coverage for abortion care has a significant effect on low-income women's ability to decide to end an unwanted pregnancy, and in the absence of such coverage many women are unable to obtain an abortion; and

WHEREAS, many women in Cook County, including state and federal employees, obtain insurance coverage through other public insurance programs that also restrict coverage for abortion; and

WHEREAS, all women should have insurance coverage for comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion care, to ensure that their economic status or the source of their insurance coverage does not affect important health care decisions or access; and

WHEREAS, millions of women nationally, and hundreds of thousands in Illinois and Cook County, are subject to these inequitable policies; and

WHEREAS, public health insurance should cover all of a woman's options when she is facing an unintended pregnancy, so that she is able to make a real decision about what is best for her and her family; and

WHEREAS, Cook County provides important support for many women to ensure that they have access to comprehensive reproductive health care, including abortion, but regardless of the resources dedicated by Cook County, bans on coverage for abortion continue to harm many women; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that funding of comprehensive reproductive health care be increased and that abortion be covered as part of comprehensive reproductive health care in all public insurance programs to ensure that services are accessible for women who are enrolled in such programs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President and members of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County call upon federal and state elected officials to maintain the protections established by *Roe v. Wade* for access to comprehensive reproductive health care and undo restrictions that have been placed on those protections; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and members of the Board of Commissioners of Cook County call for increased federal and state funding for comprehensive reproductive health care and to reinstate coverage for abortion services for women enrolled in public insurance programs.