

Standing Up for **Women & Families** in 2014



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Our Agenda for Progress

The National Partnership for Women & Families is dedicated to expanding opportunities for women and improving the well-being of our nation's families. For more than 40 years, we have worked to promote access to quality, affordable health care, reproductive health and rights, policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family, and fairness in the workplace.

We work to address all of these issues because women are mothers, daughters and workers, caregivers and breadwinners, and consumers and business owners. We need policies and programs that address the complexities and realities of the lives of women and families today.

The National Partnership works in public and behind the scenes; we lead coalitions and forge new relationships; we provide technical assistance to lawmakers and strategic counsel to allies; we advise decision makers; we develop and draft new policies; we educate and mobilize the public; and we engage women, men, policymakers and the media – all to advance and protect concrete policy changes that improve the lives of women and families.

“...I firmly believe when women succeed, America succeeds.”

— **President Barack Obama**
State of the Union address,
January 28, 2014

When campaigns end the hard work of implementing policy begins. At a time when millions of families are facing economic distress, wage and pregnancy discrimination continue, workers are struggling without family friendly workplace policies, women's access to reproductive health care is at risk, and health reform implementation remains under attack, achieving meaningful policy changes that improve life for women and families must be a top priority.

Stand with us in 2014, as we stand up for women and families by promoting:

- ▶ Comprehensive Reproductive Health Care, including Contraception, Abortion Services and Maternity Care
- ▶ Access to Quality, Comprehensive Health Coverage and Care
- ▶ Paid Sick Days, Paid Family and Medical Leave, and Expanded Access to the *Family and Medical Leave Act*
- ▶ Fair Pay for Women, an End to Pregnancy Discrimination and an Increase to the Minimum Wage
- ▶ A Fair and Diverse Judiciary

Women's Health Programs

At the National Partnership we believe that every woman deserves access to quality, comprehensive reproductive health care that includes contraception, abortion services, maternity care, and medically accurate information about her reproductive health. We also believe that all Americans deserve access to quality, affordable health care that is coordinated and patient- and family-centered. To that end, we work tirelessly to:

▶ **Ensure That All Women Can Access Safe Abortion Care No Matter Where They Live:**

More state-level abortion restrictions have been enacted in the past three years than in the entire previous decade.¹ These restrictions inhibit a woman's ability to make her own personal health care decisions. Access to safe abortion is increasingly dependent on a woman's zip code. Many of these restrictions also directly interfere with a woman's relationship with her health care provider by placing unnecessary restrictions on doctors, and trying to force them to practice medicine based on political ideology, not their medical knowledge or the needs of their individual patients. The National Partnership:

- ▶ Leads a new multi-state initiative – Bad Medicine – to shine a spotlight on the harm caused by laws that impose political ideology on medical care and to mobilize a diverse community of national medical societies in the fight to protect and expand women's access to quality reproductive health care.



- ▶ Leads the Coalition to Protect the Patient-Provider Relationship, in collaboration with the National Physicians Alliance, to bring together national medical societies and diverse advocacy groups working on reproductive rights, end-of-life care, gun control, environmental issues and more – all facing state laws that interfere in the patient-provider relationship.
- ▶ Supports the Women's Health Protection Act to improve women's ability to make personal health care decisions regardless of where they live and to repair and protect the relationship between a woman and her health care provider.

▶ **Protect and Expand Abortion Coverage and Access:** Women who are enrolled in Medicaid or otherwise depend on the federal government for health insurance have their abortion coverage unfairly restricted through policies such as the Hyde Amendment. The *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) further restricts access to abortion coverage by requiring that health plans purchased through the health insurance marketplaces segregate premium payments for this coverage. The National Partnership:

- ▶ Fights to repeal abortion coverage restrictions in the ACA and, until that happens, implement restrictions in the least burdensome manner possible so that abortion coverage remains available to women with private health plans.

- ▶ Supports the *MARCH for Military Women Act* so that all women in the military can access abortion care in military medical facilities.
 - ▶ Supports the *Peace Corps Equity Act* to expand access to abortion coverage for women in the Peace Corps in cases of rape, incest and life endangerment.
 - ▶ Advocates against refusal provisions that allow health care providers, insurance plans and medical institutions to refuse to provide abortion services, including life-saving emergency abortion services and abortion coverage.
 - ▶ Opposes the Hyde Amendment and other restrictions on women's access to abortion coverage in the annual appropriations process.
- ▶ **Improve Access to Contraception:** The ACA requires all new private health plans to cover a broad range of women's preventive health services without cost-sharing, including all FDA-approved forms of contraception. Millions of women are already benefiting from this provision in the law, which provides them access to the contraceptive coverage they need and that in turn improves health outcomes and saves money. The National Partnership believes that *all* women should have access to contraception without cost-sharing and:
- ▶ Opposes efforts by employers and others to undermine the contraceptive coverage rules in the ACA, including attempts to allow employers to deny women contraceptive coverage.
 - ▶ Works to ensure that the ACA is implemented in a way that guarantees every woman has access to the contraceptive method that works for her without cost-sharing.
- ▶ **Support Public Funding of Preventive Reproductive Health Services:** Investments in pregnancy prevention make women healthier and save almost \$6 for every \$1 spent.² Therefore, the National Partnership:
- ▶ Supports robust funding for family planning through Title X and Medicaid.
 - ▶ Supports funding for the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative, the Personal Responsibility Education Program, and the Division of Adolescent and School Health to provide medically accurate information to young people about their sexual health, and opposes funding for abstinence-only sex education.
 - ▶ Opposes efforts to defund Planned Parenthood.

▶ **Enhance the Quality of Maternity Care:**

Despite the billions of dollars spent on maternity care in the United States each year – many of them Medicaid dollars – the nation's infant and maternal mortality rates are too high, especially among Black, American Indian and Alaska Native women. Improving the quality of care for women and their babies is critical.



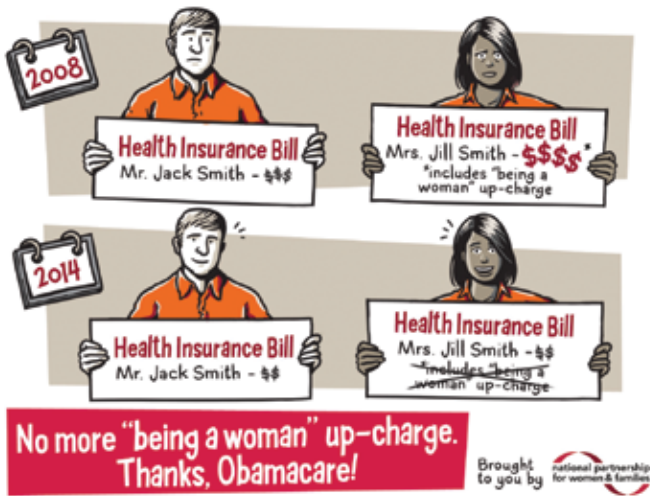
“... The Affordable Care Act is a women’s issue... it’s the first time in federal law that we say insurers cannot discriminate against women... that there will be access to birth control... we will expand Medicaid... and made health care accessible to those with lower incomes, and that disproportionately is moms who are trying to raise children.”

— **Senator Elizabeth Warren**
at the National Partnership’s
Congressional Briefing,
February 26, 2014



Earlier this year Childbirth Connection, a 95-year old organization that has pioneered strategies to promote safe, effective and evidence-based maternity care and that has deep roots in the clinical and research communities, became a core program at the National Partnership. By joining forces, we have come together to improve women’s reproductive health and strengthen the quality and outcomes of maternity care. In support of these goals the National Partnership:

- ▶ Leads efforts to support the *Quality Care for Moms and Babies Act* to establish quality measures for maternity care and test new models of care.
- ▶ Supports robust funding for the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Program to ensure access to quality maternity care, especially for low-income women.



“For decades, few things exposed hard-working families to economic hardship more than a broken health care system... Because of this law [the Affordable Care Act], no American, can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a pre-existing condition like asthma, back pain or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she’s a woman.”

— **President Barack Obama**
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▶ **Support Implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Improve Health Care Delivery:** The ACA is the greatest advance for women’s health in a generation. It is moving us closer to the day when essential women’s health services are covered by health insurance, prevention is a priority, and care is coordinated so family caregivers don’t have to shoulder unmanageable burdens. The National Partnership is committed to helping women and families realize the promise of the ACA and works with partners to ensure that it is implemented in ways that will benefit women and families. To that end, the National Partnership:

- ▶ Advocates for robust implementation of regulations for Section 1557 of the ACA. Section 1557 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age and disability in federally funded health programs or activities – including in the health insurance market and in the provision of health services.
- ▶ Works to ensure that eligible lower-income pregnant women are able to enroll in the coverage option that best suits their needs, be that Medicaid, the Basic Health Program, a subsidized Qualified Health Plan, or multiple coverage programs.
- ▶ Supports new ways of delivering health care to provide better coordinated, patient-centered care that improves quality, increases the value of every health care dollar, and meaningfully involves patients and their families – those directly affected by changes in the health care system – in redesigning the way health care services are delivered.
- ▶ Leads the Campaign for Better Care, a broad-based coalition of more than 80 consumer organizations and leverages this coalition as a powerful force to make patient and family priorities a top priority for policymakers.

- ▶ **Support Implementation of the Electronic Health Record (EHR) Incentive Program (“Meaningful Use”):** As the primary managers of their families’ health care, women will benefit directly from the improvements in our health care system being catalyzed by the EHR Incentive Program, a federal effort that gives Medicare and Medicaid health care providers financial incentives to adopt and use EHRs. This program provides tangible benefits to taxpayers by enabling patients and families to access their health information online and communicate electronically with their doctors. As a result, women and families are able to make better health care decisions and manage their care more effectively. In support of this effort, the National Partnership:



For Valentine’s Day 2014, thousands of National Partnership activists sent a “heart” to members of the Obama administration, thanking them for five years of progress in giving patients and families online access and tools to better manage their health. We were thrilled that National Health IT Coordinator Karen DeSalvo included our Valentine’s “card” in her high-profile presentation (February 27, 2014) before 37,000 health care IT professionals, clinicians, executives and vendors from around the world.

- ▶ Leads the Consumer Partnership for eHealth (CPeH), a coalition of more than 50 consumer, patient and labor organizations – with a combined membership representing more than 127 million Americans – working to advance private and secure health information technology in ways that measurably improve the lives of individuals and their families.
- ▶ Works to advance the kind of robust health information technology that reduces health disparities; increases patients’ access to their own health information while protecting their privacy; makes care more effective, coordinated and affordable; and supports women and families in identifying and achieving personal health and wellness goals.
- ▶ Ensures that women and families share equally in the benefits of electronic health data exchange regardless of race, ethnicity, language, disability status, or sexual orientation or gender identity.

**“Every American
deserves an
equal chance at a
full, healthy life.”**

– Debra Ness
National Partnership
for Women & Families

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“Today, women make up about half our workforce. But they still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. That is wrong, and in 2014, it’s an embarrassment. A woman deserves equal pay for equal work. She deserves to have a baby without sacrificing her job. A mother deserves a day off to care for a sick child or sick parent without running into hardship – and you know what, a father does, too. It’s time to do away with workplace policies that belong in a ‘Mad Men’ episode.”

— **President Barack Obama**
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These countries provide paid leave for moms. Shouldn't we?



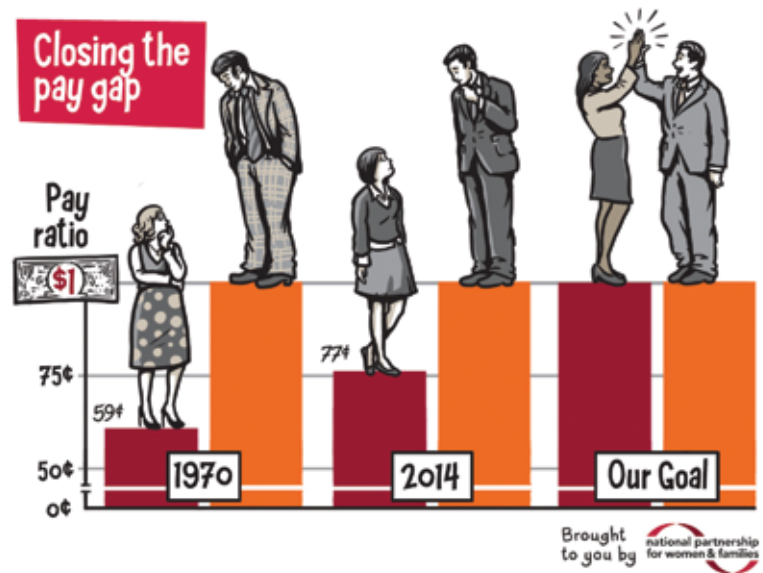
Workplace Programs

At the National Partnership, we believe it is past time for workplaces to reflect the realities of life for 21st century families. In support of this vision, we work to:

- ▶ **Support Paid Family and Medical Leave Programs:** A mere 12 percent of U.S. workers have access to paid family leave through their employers and less than 40 percent have employer-provided, short-term disability insurance.³ Yet at some point, nearly all workers need time away from work to deal with a serious personal or family illness, or care for a new child. To advocate for an urgently needed change, the National Partnership:
 - ▶ Convenes a coalition of more than 400 organizations in all 50 states to support the *Family And Medical Insurance Leave Act* (FAMILY Act) – legislation we helped draft – that would create a national paid leave insurance program to allow workers to earn a portion of their pay while they take a limited amount of time away from work to care for a newborn, newly adopted child or newly placed foster child; care for a family member with a serious health condition; or address their own serious health condition.
 - ▶ Supports the State Paid Leave Fund within the U.S. Department of Labor which would provide competitive grants to states to establish their own paid leave programs.
 - ▶ Works with advocates and policymakers across the nation to develop state-level policy solutions.

- ▶ **Support Paid Sick Days:** Nearly 40 million private sector workers cannot earn a single paid sick day to recover from common, short-term illnesses.⁴ This puts the health and economic stability of these workers and their families in jeopardy, and the whole community suffers. To address this basic but critical need, the National Partnership:
 - ▶ Leads a nationwide coalition of organizations pushing for the passage of the *Healthy Families Act* that would establish a national paid sick days standard and allow workers to earn up to seven job-protected sick days each year.
 - ▶ Plays an integral role as legal, technical and strategic advisor to state and local paid sick days campaigns.
- ▶ **Expand the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA):** The FMLA has been used by workers more than 100 million times, but more than 40 percent of workers are ineligible for the unpaid leave it provides.⁵ As the organization that drafted the FMLA and led the fight for its passage, the National Partnership:
 - ▶ Leads a broad-based coalition that is working hard to safeguard this historic law and to advance legislation that expands the FMLA to cover more workers who need leave for more reasons: workers in businesses with fewer than 50 employees; part-time workers; leave to care for additional family members, including domestic partners, parents-in-law, adult children, siblings, grandchildren and grandparents; and other uses for leave, including for children’s educational activities and routine family medical needs.

▶ **Promote Fair Pay:** Women employed full time, year round are paid only 77 cents for every dollar paid to men. The gap is even larger for women of color, with African American women paid 64 cents and Latinas 54 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Latino men.⁶ Women are also nearly two-thirds of all workers who are paid the minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, which means millions of families are living in poverty.⁷ Because that the wage gap must be closed, the National Partnership:



- ▶ Plays a key leadership role in advocating for passage of the *Paycheck Fairness Act* that would update and strengthen the *Equal Pay Act* by closing loopholes and improving the law’s effectiveness. The *Paycheck Fairness Act* would make it harder for employers to hide pay discrimination, reward employers that have good pay practices, and help train women and girls in salary negotiation.

- ▶ Supports the *Fair Minimum Wage Act* that would raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour and the tipped minimum wage to 70 percent of the full minimum wage.
- ▶ **Protect Pregnant Workers:** Despite existing protections, pregnant workers in this country still face discrimination. Pregnant workers are forced out of their jobs and denied reasonable accommodations that would enable them to continue working and supporting their families. The National Partnership:
 - ▶ Educates the public and policymakers about the increase in pregnancy discrimination complaints, the rights of women who experience discrimination, and the need for stronger laws to protect pregnant workers.
 - ▶ Supports the *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act* to help end pregnancy discrimination and promote the health and economic security of pregnant women, their babies, and their families.

A Fair and Diverse Judiciary

At the National Partnership, we believe that the federal courts remain critical to protecting women's rights; therefore, we:

- ▶ **Encourage the Confirmation of Qualified Judges with a Demonstrated Commitment to Equal Justice at Every Level of the Federal Judiciary:** Appointed for life, the decisions made by federal judges will have an impact on women and families for decades to come and we believe that the appointment of federal judges is critical to the lives of women and families. Therefore we educate decision makers and the public about the importance of nominating and confirming those qualified judges and justices who increase diversity on the federal courts and whose records demonstrate that they understand the needs of women and families, including access to abortion and contraceptive services, equal pay, family and medical leave, comprehensive health care, and the ability to compete in workplaces free of discrimination.

¹ Nash, E. et. al. (2014, January). Laws Affecting Reproductive Health and Rights: 2013 State Policy Review. Retrieved 6 February 2014, from <http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/updates/2013/statetrends42013.html>.

² Frost, J. et. al. (2013, July). Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2010. Retrieved 6 February 2014, from <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/win/contraceptive-needs-2010.pdf>.

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2012, September). National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, March 2012 (Table 32). Retrieved 6 February 2014, from <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2012/ebbl0050.pdf>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Abt Associates Inc. (2012, September). Family and Medical Leave in 2012: Technical Report. Retrieved 6 February 2014, from <http://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/fmla/fmla2012.htm>.

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2011 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2011, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex. [Unpublished calculation] Retrieved 6 February 2014, from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032013/perinc/pinc05_000.htm.

⁷ National Women's Law Center. (2014). Our Issues, Minimum Wage. Retrieved 7 February 2014, from <http://www.nwlc.org/our-issues/poverty-%2526-income-support/minimum-wage>.

**Strong
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