

International family planning and reproductive health programs

April 24, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio Secretary
US Department of State 2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20541

Dear Secretary Rubio:

We write to express alarm at the reckless reported cancellation of international family planning and reproductive health programs, which in Fiscal Year 2024 alone were estimated to save the lives of 34,000 women and girls, prevent 5.2 million unsafe abortions, and serve 47.6 million women and couples around the world with modern contraceptive care.¹

For more than six decades, the United States has led the world in supporting voluntary international family planning and reproductive health programs. These programs provide critical services: counseling on and access to a full range of voluntary modern contraceptives, reproductive health education, training for healthcare workers, screening for sexually transmitted diseases, research and development for new contraceptive methods to better meet women's needs, and health care to treat female genital mutilation (FGM) and obstetric fistula—the latter a devastating childbirth injury.²

These efforts are proven to reduce unintended pregnancies, prevent maternal and child deaths, promote women's empowerment and the ability to safely and freely grow their families, and lift families out of poverty. They also advance U.S. national interests and make our nation safer, stronger, and more prosperous by contributing to global health, stability, and economic growth.

Congress first authorized international family planning programs in Section 104 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (P.L. 87-195, as amended). In FY 2024, Congress appropriated \$607.5 million for bilateral and multilateral family planning programs through the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024 (P.L. 118-47). Any attempt to cancel or redirect these funds without proper consultation with and notification to Congress is illegal and unconstitutional.

The consequences of halting these programs are not hypothetical. This Administration's executive order, "Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid," halted international

¹ Stephanie Nolen, "Millions of Women Will Lose Access to Contraception as a Result of Trump Cuts," *New York Times*, April 1, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/01/health/usaaid-contraception-cuts.html>; Samira Damavandi et al., "Just the Numbers: The Impact of US International Family Planning Assistance, 2024,"

Guttmacher Institute, February 2025, <https://www.guttmacher.org/2025/02/just-numbers-impact-us-international-family-planning-assistance-2024>.

² Consistent with federal law, these programs do not fund abortion.

family planning and reproductive health programs, causing maternal death and injury, the closure of clinics in locations with high incidents of maternal death and sexual violence, the denial of contraceptive care, and stranded \$27 million worth of family planning commodities procured with U.S. dollars.³ A full cancellation would significantly escalate these harms and cost lives.

Given these serious concerns, we respectfully request written responses to the following questions by May 16, 2025:

1. Who made the determination to explicitly exclude family planning and reproductive health from the foreign assistance waiver process and ultimately terminate international family planning and reproductive health awards? Please provide a list of all terminated awards and the specific reasoning for each termination.
2. What is the Administration's assessment of how many women and girls will be impacted by the cancellation of family planning and reproductive health programs?
3. What is the status of U.S.-procured family planning commodities currently being held in ports and warehouses, and what does the U.S. government plan to do with those commodities?

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,