

# **The Republican Budget Bill is an Attack on Women and Families**

## *A Report by Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney*

### **Introduction**

H.R. 1, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011, is a distinct attack on the quality of life for women and their families. While the proposed cuts in what is commonly referred to as a continuing resolution, or CR, would be devastating to Americans as a whole, this bill would change the daily lives of women for the worse. From birth to old age, women would be negatively affected by the proposed cuts in H.R. 1. In the U.S. there are four million more women than men, meaning women makeup roughly 51% of the U.S. population. Furthermore, women are 57% of the population for ages 65 and older.<sup>i</sup>

The bill cuts industries that disproportionately employ women and attacks programs that women depend on, such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. It zeros out Title X funding, making obtaining primary care and preventive screenings difficult for many women. It cuts childcare programs and afterschool programs so that women must choose between working and supporting their families or providing childcare.

The following are some of the ways H.R. 1 will deeply and negatively impact American women and their families.

## **What a Woman's Life Would Look Like Under H.R.1's Cuts**

### **Birth**

#### **H.R. 1 Attacks Prenatal Care**

The Maternal and Child Health block grant would be cut by \$50 million dollars.<sup>ii</sup> The goals of the Maternal and Child Health block grant include reducing infant mortality and the incidence of handicapping conditions among children, increasing the number of children in low-income households who receive assessments and follow-up diagnostic and treatment services, and to provide and ensure access to comprehensive prenatal care for women.<sup>iii</sup>

## **Early Life/Motherhood**

### **H.R.1 Would Mean that Thousands of Women and Children Must Continue to Live in Dilapidated Public Housing**

Female headed households with children account for 36% of all public housing residents.<sup>iv</sup> The most distressed public housing is primarily family public housing where a high number of families are likely to be headed by women. The Republican budget zeros out funding for the Hope VI and its successor program Choice Neighborhoods. According to the Urban Institute, as of June 2006, the HOPE VI revitalization grants have led to the demolition of 78,100 severely distressed units with another 10,400 units slated for redevelopment.<sup>v</sup> In the same Urban Institute report, it was found that girls in families that received HOPE VI vouchers had statistically significantly reduced behavior problems and interaction with the juvenile court system. A principle goal of the program is to provide an improved living environment for residents as well as a path towards financial stability. Without the HOPE VI program, school-age children could spend their childhoods in public housing developments that have significant environmental dangers that may result in health issues, developmental delays and behavior problems.

### **H.R. 1 Cuts 1 Million Dollars from the Housing Choice Voucher Program**

The Housing Choice Voucher Program currently provides rental assistance to over two million families.<sup>vi</sup> 50% of residents in tenant-based HUD programs are female head-of-households, meaning these cuts would disproportionately affect women.<sup>vii</sup>

### **Cuts to Head Start Increase Child Care Waiting Lists by Thousands**

The CR proposes a cut of \$1.1 billion, or 14 percent below the FY 2010 appropriation, for Head Start programs. This would result in almost 218,000 children nationwide to be forced to leave the program this year.

During the 2009-2010 program years, there were 117,687 children and pregnant women served in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The positive impact of Head Start cannot be overlooked for the children enrolled as well as their families. Head Start results in reduced mortality rates for 5 to 9 year olds by up to 50%. Children that participate in Head Start are more likely to receive necessary vaccinations and less likely to become obese. Participation in Head Start has been shown to lower family Medicaid costs by \$198 per family.

This cut is also a jobs killer - it would put over 55,000 Head Start teachers out of work. In the long-run Head Start saves U.S. taxpayers money. According to the National Head Start Association, for every dollar invested in Head Start, society is saved \$7 through participants' increased earnings, employment and family stability and a decrease in welfare dependency and

crime costs.<sup>viii</sup> Many families rely on Head Start programs so that parents can work. If parents lose low-cost daycare options for their children, they may not be able to work themselves.

### **H.R. 1 Cuts the Child Care and Development Block Grant by \$39 Million Leaving 150,000 Children With No Place to Go**<sup>ix</sup>

Through The Child Care and Development Block Grant low-income families can receive assistance with child care costs. Without these funds thousands of young boys and girls would be affected as their parents struggle to pay for costly daycare.<sup>x</sup> The program is administered to eligible families through certificates (vouchers), or grants and contracts with providers. Parents may choose their own child care provider as long as they satisfy basic health and safety requirements. These included prevention and control of infectious diseases, as well as required immunizations and others. One of the main goals of the program is to, “promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions on the child care that best suits their family’s needs.”<sup>xi</sup>

### **Cuts to After School Programs Mean a Decrease in Safety for Children or Job Loss for Women**

The Republican bill cuts \$100 million dollars from 21st Century Community Learning Centers at the Department of Education. This means that not only will the children participating in the programs currently lose an additional educational opportunity but also that many low-income working mothers will be faced with the choice to find alternate after-school-time care, trust that their children will be safe on their own or to reduce their working hours. This has the potential to affect up to 140,000 children.<sup>xii</sup>

### **The CR Keeps Low-Income Families from Accessing Nutritious Food**

H.R. 1 includes a \$747 million dollar cut from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC Program). Nationally, more than one in ten households participate in the SNAP program<sup>xiii</sup>, including 9.6 million low-income women and children each month.<sup>xiv</sup> According to a Carsey Institute study, single-parent households are more likely to participate in SNAP.<sup>xv</sup> In its annual study, USDA found that female heads-of-households are more likely to use SNAP, with African-American households being the highest participants in SNAP.<sup>xvi</sup>

### **Girls Would Lose Programs to Get Ahead in Math and Science**

The CR eliminates entirely the Women’s Educational Equity Act (WEEA) funding. WEEA was first established in 1974 to help educational agencies and institutions meet the requirements of Title IX. Examples of funding allowances from this program include: training for teachers and

other school personnel to encourage gender equity in the classroom; evaluating exemplary model programs to advance gender equity; and developing strategies to assist local education agencies in evaluating, disseminating, and replicating gender-equity programs.<sup>xvii</sup> This will backtrack progress like the 2009 announcement by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan of the award of \$2.4 million dollars in grants to 13 groups to support projects that will help high school girls gain higher proficiency in math and science.<sup>xviii</sup>

## **Teenage Years**

### **H.R. 1 Could Result in an Increase in Teen Pregnancy**

H.R. 1 eliminates funding for the Teen Pregnancy Prevention program, which in FY 2010 received appropriations of \$110 million. According to the Guttmacher Institute, “[...] the U.S. teen pregnancy rate continues to be one of the highest in the developed world—more than twice as high as rates in Canada (28 per 1,000 women aged 15–19 in 2006) and Sweden (31 per 1,000).”<sup>xix</sup> Furthermore, from the same report, about 750,000 young women in the U.S. ages 15-19 become pregnant annually. The Teen Pregnancy Prevention program makes competitive grants to public agencies and private non-profit organizations to support evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention efforts. For example, New York State has benefited with \$11,832,504 in funding for various teen pregnancy prevention programs.<sup>xx</sup>

## **Reproductive Years and Preventative Health**

### **This Bill Eliminates the Source of Primary and Preventative Care for Many Women**

The bill eliminates funding for the Title X Family Planning program, which received \$317 million dollars in FY10. Grantees include state and local health departments, hospitals, community health centers and private non-profit organizations. These health centers provide primary care as well as cancer screenings and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and other preventative services. This would impact organizations like Planned Parenthood, which has a health center in almost every state with a total of 825 health centers nationwide. An average of one in four women has visited a Planned Parenthood health center in her lifetime.<sup>xxi</sup>

### **This Bill Will Allow Survivors of Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault to Be Rejected by Insurance Companies**

The CR will end the individual responsibility provision in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which would require insurance companies to sell affordable insurance products to everyone, regardless of a pre-existing condition. For women, pre-existing conditions can include c-sections, breast or cervical cancer, or receiving medical treatment as a result of

domestic or sexual violence.<sup>xxii</sup> This could mean women are re-victimized by their health insurance providers by being refused insurance.

## **Entering the Work Force and College**

### **Cuts in Health Professions and Nurse Training are Employment Cuts for Women**

In the CR, Health and Human Services (HHS) health professions training programs are cut by \$57 million, or 23 percent below the FY 2010 level. Health care practitioner and technical occupations in general are about 75% women. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 92% of registered nurses are women and licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses are 91.4 percent female.<sup>xxiii</sup> These HHS programs are primarily designed to expand the number of primary care providers in medically underserved areas. There are additional cuts to a separate group of programs that support training of nurses and scholarships for nursing students by \$88 million or 36 percent. These cuts amount to massive job and education cuts for women.

### **Cutting Title I Grants to School Districts Results in a Loss of Jobs for Women and Poor Education**

The CR cuts almost \$700 million dollars from one of the Federal Government's two major formula programs that provide aid for education to states and localities. The cuts to Title 1 Grants that would result in a loss of jobs for teachers and aides would disproportionately affect employment for women. According to the National Bureau of Labor Statistics 2009, 75.3% of elementary and secondary school teachers are women.<sup>xxiv</sup> There are close to 9 million female elementary and secondary school teachers nation-wide. These cuts mean that about 10,000 teachers and aides could lose their jobs.<sup>xxv</sup> The cuts to Title 1 Grants that would result in a loss of jobs for teachers and aides would disproportionately affect employment for women. In addition, the Title 1 Grants to School Districts program works to narrow the divide between children of wealth and low-income families. According to the Department of Education website, the program provides financial assistance to local education agencies and schools with high numbers or high percentages of poor children to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards.<sup>xxvi</sup>

### **The Continuing Resolution Increases Unemployment for Women**

The CR cuts more than \$4 billion dollars to job training programs under the Workforce Investment Act. Under this CR, funding would be zeroed out for those looking for jobs. Since July 2009, women have lost 366,000 jobs, according to the National Women's Law Center.<sup>xxvii</sup> A Joint Economic Committee report found that increases in unemployment during the recession have been especially steep for female heads of households.<sup>xxviii</sup> According to the same report,

in April 2009, nearly one million working-age female heads of household wanted a job but could not find one. One out of every ten women maintaining a family is unemployed, which exceeds the highest rate (9.0) experienced during the 2001 recession and the “job-less recovery” that followed. Women of color have fared the worst - black women experience an unemployment rate of 13.3 percent and Hispanic women 11.0 percent. Cuts in job training programs would be devastating for women seeking employment or that are underemployed.

### **Cuts in Employment Programs for Youth Mean a Dire Future for Young Women**

Youth Build is eliminated in the Republican bill. Right now there are 273 Youthbuild programs in 45 states, Washington, DC, and the Virgin Islands. YouthBuild offers skills in areas such as career development, civic engagement, community service and asset building to youth. Since 1994, 92,000 YouthBuild students have built 19,000 units of affordable housing. In 2010, 29% of YouthBuild participants were young women and 54% of all YouthBuild are African-American Youth.<sup>xxix</sup> In an occupation where women account for only 2.7% of all construction workers and managers<sup>xxx</sup>, and when there is an increasing need for ‘green builders’, we should not be cutting a program that gives young women access to fields where they have not traditionally been present.

Job Corps is also affected with a proposed \$300 million dollar recession in funding that could lead to 10,000 fewer program slots.<sup>xxxi</sup> The Jobs Corps program provides free education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. In 2008, 41% of Job Corps participants were young women.<sup>xxxii</sup> These cuts mean that thousands of young women (and men) will lose an invaluable career path and potentially be on the streets with nothing to do.

### **Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)**

CNCS is demolished by the cuts to the CR. This includes cuts to AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Lean and Serve. These programs benefit communities while allowing Americans of all ages to gain work experience that they can apply to future employment opportunities. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, “In 2009, 63.4 million Americans volunteered to help their communities. This is an *additional* 1.6 million volunteers compared to 2008, making 2009 the largest single-year increase in the number of volunteers since 2003. Volunteers provided 8.1 billion hours of service in 2009, which has an estimated dollar value of \$169 billion.”<sup>xxxiii</sup> Volunteers come from all ages and backgrounds but there were increased volunteer rates among women. This is particularly true of women ages 45-54 and married women.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

### **H.R. 1 Puts the Women's Bureau at the Workforce Data Quality Initiative At Risk**

H.R. 1 zeros out the funding for the Workforce Data Quality Initiative, putting the only federal office addressing the needs and issues of female workers at risk. According to Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis, "This year, the Women's Bureau will mark 90 years of work formulating standards and policies that promote the welfare of wage-earning women and advance their opportunity for fair and profitable employment. The Bureau's efforts to provide women in the workplace with the information and tools needed to obtain good jobs and economic security for themselves and their families is invaluable in this time of economic recovery."<sup>xxxv</sup> With these cuts, this Bureau that focuses on the unique needs of working women and mothers, may cease to exist.

### **Cuts to Pell Grants Mean Less Young Women Being Able to Attend College**

H.R. 1 cuts the maximum Pell Grant award by over \$800 per student.<sup>xxxvi</sup> It eliminates federal funding for the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants that are used to assist students with the greatest financial needs. According to a report prepared for the White House Council on Women and girls, women enroll in greater numbers than men in both undergraduate and graduate institutions. Women have not only caught up with men in college attendance but younger women are now more likely than younger men to have a college or a master's degree.<sup>xxxvii</sup> These valuable gains in education are balanced with the fact that women tend to score lower in mathematics assessment tests, and in the fields of science and technology women make up only about one-quarter of graduates. Women need access to federal education funding to continue and add to their educational achievement.

## **Retirement and Older Years**

### **H.R.1 Social Security \$125 Million Dollars in Cuts Affect Over 20 Million Women**

In 2009, according to a Joint Economic Committee Report, over 20 million women aged 65 and older received Social Security benefits, either from retirement benefits, survivors' insurance or disability insurance.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Without Social Security benefits, over half of women 65 and over would be living in poverty. Women are less likely than men to have income outside of Social Security to rely on in retirement, with Social Security accounting for two-thirds of all income for women aged 65 and over. For these women, Social Security is an essential source of income post-retirement, providing a life-long stream of income that is protected against inflation. Women that are 65 and over make up nearly 10 percent of the U.S. population.

### **The Medicare Donut Hole Will Come Back**

Older women are also greatly affected if 'donut hole' payments are stopped. In 2007, 64% of the Medicare beneficiaries that received money to cover out of pocket prescription drug

reimbursements, known as the 'donut hole' were women.<sup>xxxix</sup> According to the National Women's Law Center, approximately 11 million low and middle income women will receive subsidies to help them purchase health coverage through the new Health Insurance Exchanges. Rep. Steve King's amendment #268 to H.R.1 prohibits funds in H.R. 1 to be used to pay the salary of any officer or employee of any Federal department or agency with respect to carrying out the provisions of Public Law 111-148 (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act), Public Law 111-152 (Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010), or any amendment made by such either Public Law. This means that medication reimbursements would be ended and older women would be stuck disproportionately with these costs.

### **Women Would Lose Access to Life Saving Preventative Screenings**

Dismantling the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act would mean refusing preventative care to women. Under the Affordable Care Act, if you have Original Medicare you may qualify for a yearly wellness exam and many preventive services for free. These preventative services include cervical cancer screening, including Pap smear tests, pelvic exams and mammograms.<sup>xi</sup> The National Women's Law Center describes that up to 8.2 million women would be included when Medicaid is expanded to include those up to 133% of the federal poverty level (FPL).<sup>xii</sup>

### **Senior Community Service Employment Program**

This program faces a 63.6% decrease in funding. In 2008, 70% of the program's 300 enrolled participants were women.<sup>xlii</sup> The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a community service and work based training program for older workers. Authorized by the Older Americans Act, the program provides subsidized, service-based training for low-income persons 55 or older who are unemployed and have poor employment prospects. SCSEP's goal is to place 30% of its authorized positions into unsubsidized employment annually.

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<sup>i</sup> WOMEN IN AMERICA Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being (March 2011) *Prepared by* U. S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration and Executive Office of the President Office of Management and Budget *In cooperation with* Bureau of Justice Statistics Bureau of Labor Statistics Census Bureau National Center for Education Statistics National Center for Health Statistics National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics for the White House Council on Women and Girls Retrieved from: [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/Women\\_in\\_America.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf) on 03/02/11.

<sup>ii</sup> National Women's Law Center, President Obama's Fiscal Year 2012 Budget and H.R. 1, the Continuing Resolution: A Tale of Two Visions, February 18, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/president-obama%E2%80%99s-fiscal-year-2012-budget-and-hr-1-continuing-resolution-tale-two-visions> on 03/02/11.

<sup>iii</sup> HRSA Maternal and Child Health Bureau Division of State and Community Health. Maternal and Child Health Services Title V Block Grant. Retrieved from: <http://mchb.hrsa.gov/programs/blockgrant/overview.htm> on 03/02/11.

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<sup>xxxv</sup> Testimony of Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis before the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Committee on Appropriations U.S. House of Representatives, March 10, 2010. Retrieved from: [http://www.dol.gov/\\_sec/media/congress/20100310\\_appropriations.htm](http://www.dol.gov/_sec/media/congress/20100310_appropriations.htm) on 03/02/11.

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