

Resolution Title: Resolution to Insure Women's Access to Healthcare, Including Reproductive Healthcare

Submitted by: Professional Staff Congress/CUNY

WHEREAS, the Congressional Omnibus spending bill that extended the debt ceiling had an addendum that enables the healthcare industry, including insurers, employers as well as service providers, to exclude routine reproductive health services they consider objectionable; and

WHEREAS, women need access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare that includes contraception, sterilization, abortion, or fertility services, as well as preventive drug therapy for rape victims; and

WHEREAS, the Catholic Health Care industry has been lobbying for many years to institute such "conscience" clauses even though "consciences" are generally assumed to pertain to individuals not industries; and

WHEREAS, women, not the industry, must have the right to decide which reproductive healthcare services they need at any given time; and

WHEREAS, mergers in the healthcare industry have meant that in some parts of the country, including upstate New York, the Catholic Hospital Association is the only provider of healthcare services; and

WHEREAS, allowing such exemptions means that women would be forced to pay out of pocket for routine reproductive healthcare; and

WHEREAS, such exemptions could also add the burden of substantial travel for women to secure routine reproductive healthcare; and

WHEREAS, these exemptions stigmatize and marginalize reproductive health care and women; and

WHEREAS, these exemptions favor the preferences of the industry over patients' needs and inhibit the medical advice practitioners are able to offer patients; and

WHEREAS, such exemptions transfer potentially costly services from insurers to patients; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT oppose policies that exclude routine reproductive health services; and be it further,

RESOLVED, that NYSUT encourage its labor affiliates to oppose policies that exclude routine reproductive healthcare services; and be it further

RESOLVED, that NYSUT inform locals about the potential decrease in healthcare benefits if employers rely on healthcare provided by those covered by such exemptions; and be it further,

RESOLVED, that NYSUT and AFT oppose this addendum to the omnibus Spending Bill and include overturning the addendum a part of its Congressional legislative agenda and encourage its labor affiliates to do so as well.