

My name is Kate Kegarise and I am representing Allegheny Reproductive Health Center in support for the will of counsel calling for the repeal of the Hyde amendment. Allegheny Reproductive Health Center is an independent abortion provider in East Liberty. We have been providing abortion care for women in Pittsburgh for over 40 years. I started working in abortion care over 10 years ago and I am committed to this work because abortion is necessary, life saving health care for women. I believe that all women deserve access to legal, safe, compassionate and nonjudgmental abortion care regardless of race or income level and it is our mission at Allegheny Reproductive Health Center to provide that care. Every day at ARHC, we talk to women who are unable to pay for the cost of an abortion, but desperately need one. Many of these women have medicaid coverage, insurance that will not pay for this necessary/important health care because of the Hyde amendment. This restriction disproportionately affects poor women and women of color.

The women seeking abortions at our clinic are trying to feed their kids and pay their rent or trying to pay for their own education or save money to improve their lives and the lives of their families. Many of these women are sick from their pregnancies and struggling to keep the jobs they have because they can't work. Often these women have to push off their appointments while they save for their abortion. And as these women have to wait longer to save money, their procedures get more expensive.

Even with assistance from generous abortion funds, women who are eligible for medicaid will pay around \$300 for their abortion. Pulling together this kind of money is a hardship and an enormous life stressor for many women and especially women whose income and family size make them eligible for medicaid. Not only do some women have to forgo food or paying utility bills to pay for their abortion, they also have to contend with abortion stigma when asking for help from people around them. In our society, abortion stigma is a real and painful experience for women who seek abortions. The Hyde Amendment has further stigmatized women who access government funded medical care by denying them the health care they need. Women need abortions. They should not have to sacrifice their safety, their dignity, their physical health or their mental health to afford them.