

Glenda Wiles

From: Jerry Miller [jemiller@cybernet1.com]
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2013 10:09 AM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: Title X funding

Ravalli County Commissioners voted to reject Title X funds for County Public Health Department,
To Ravalli County Commissioners,

I apologize for the lateness of this email. I am writing in response to the vote to reject Title X funding for the County Public Health Department. It is my understanding that this was based primarily on the concerns that underage females can access services without parental approval/notification and that more debt will be passed on to our children and grandchildren. My thoughts in this matter are based on 20 plus years as a mental health therapist, ten of these in Washington State evaluating and treating sex offenders, and approximately 10 years with Riverfront Mental Health, including four years contracted with Riverfront to provide suicide prevention and mental health services to Ravalli County Detention Center.

As a parent and grandparent, I understand the concerns about access to health services by underage females. In an ideal world, all of these young females would be able to share their concerns with healthy parents who respected their feelings; however, for many this is not reality. Certainly, the most problematic is in cases where there is emotional, physical, or sexual abuse taking place. I can assure you that this is a reality in our county and that isolation of family members is a primary tool to avoid detection and ensure survival of the dysfunction. I would argue that denial of public health services eliminates one possible outlet for the most vulnerable of our community to receive professional care and exacerbates their isolation.

Regarding cost to our children and grandchildren, I believe voting against Title X is political and is clearly false economy. Entitlement programs are a major cost to taxpayers. Research supports the argument that the cost for access to preventative health care, birth control, and family planning will be far less than the consequences of unplanned children, sexually transmitted diseases, and untreated preventable illness.

I believe that we have an ethical and moral responsibility to give support to those who, for whatever reason, do not have the means to provide for their own health care. I realize that there are some who take advantage of the system but this is not a valid reason to forget the truly needy. I ask you to reconsider your votes on this matter and approve Title X funding. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Miller
Hamilton