

Glenda Wiles

From: Mary Alice Holloway [mtmash@bitterroot.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2013 3:47 PM
To: Ravalli County Commissioners
Subject: TITLE X
Attachments: letter to BCC 9-14-2013.docx

To: Commissioners Burrows, Foss, Stoltz

Please find attached letter re: the vote to not accept the Title X funding.

Not accepting this funding is wrong on so many levels. As letters to the editor in the Ravalli Republic have stated, you are seriously misled in voting against the funding. In a perfect world the county would not need this funding – everyone would have good health insurance or lots of money to pay for health care and all parents and children would have open and frank discussions re: sex. But you and I know it is not a perfect world, so that is not going to happen.

You are entitled to your own beliefs, but denying county residents funding based on one small thing that goes against your personal beliefs is just wrong, wrong, wrong.

Mary Alice Holloway
Corvallis, MT

To: County Commissioners Burrows, Foss, and Stoltz

I urge you to reconsider your decision to refuse funds designated for Title X in Ravalli County. Listed below are several reasons why this is not a decision which will benefit the County and its residents.

1.. The number of clients who decide not to confide in their parents concerning their decisions about family planning are very few compared to the 400 clients currently receiving Title X services.

2. Costs to the County in the future will significantly increase because when contraception is not available to those who cannot afford it, they will continue to have sex (UNPROTECTED SEX), the result of which will be more unwanted babies, more sexually transmitted diseases, more babies with addictions and diseases, as well as more child abuse. The costs of these situations will increase the burden on our law enforcement, our legal system, our courts, medical and mental health facilities, and other agencies.

3. By eliminating all of Title X monies, you have also effectively eliminated assistance for services including referral for abnormal pap screens, for abnormal breast exam results, domestic violence screening as well as pregnancy and pre-natal counselling. These clients have no connection with parental notification, but fall by the wayside.

I understand that the best thing for a girl in these situations is to discuss it with her parents. However, you are assuming that all parents are good, caring parents. Unfortunately, even here in Ravalli County there are parents, siblings, close family friends, and relatives who have sex unwilling or "consensual" with young girls. Those girls are afraid of telling their parents, because the repercussions can be very serious - from abandonment, to beatings, to death threats against her or her partner.

Certainly, there are citizens of Ravalli County who may object to parental notification (or the lack thereof) on religious grounds, but both the division of church and state in this country and Montana's constitution which actually gives children rights, make these arguments indefensible.

If you attempt to put this burden on other agencies or on Missoula County, you will be depriving some of their clients of needed services. The money is available; it is in the best interests of your constituents, the residents of Ravalli County to reconsider this vote.

Sincerely,

Mary Alice Holloway
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