



To assist you in crafting your written or verbal comments, Women's Health Care Center and the New Orleans Abortion Fund offer these talking points:

### **About the clinic and regulations:**

- Women's Health Care Center is an established, licensed, outpatient abortion facility that has provided abortion care in New Orleans, southern Louisiana and the Mississippi Gulf Coast for nearly two decades. WHCC provides quality options counseling and healthcare and is in good standing with DHH.
- WHCC supports reasonable efforts to improve the health and welfare of its patients. However, the proposed rules are medically unnecessary, prohibitively expensive to implement, and make it nearly impossible for the clinic to care for patients in the most medically appropriate manner.
- The proposed rules represent a complete overhaul of the regulations governing abortion services in Louisiana and would make it prohibitively expensive for it to keep operating.

### **About abortion in Louisiana and in the US:**

- Current state laws already create difficulties for women in Louisiana, especially minority and low-income women. These laws include:
  - A 24-hour waiting period, which requires women to make two visits to the clinic, resulting in extra travel costs, additional time off from work and, in many cases, an extra day of childcare.
  - The 20-week ban, which requires some women, including those whose abortion is medically necessary, to travel out of state.
  - Bans on state funding of abortion services and insurance coverage for elective abortions make paying for an abortion prohibitive for many women.
- In 2007, six women nationwide died of complications from induced legal abortions<sup>1</sup>. This death rate, while tragic, pales in comparison to the 650 deaths/year from pregnancy and delivery complications<sup>2</sup>. Yet abortion is treated as exceptionally unsafe.
- By the age of 45, about half of American women will have an unintended pregnancy and nearly 1 in 3 women will have an abortion. Eighty-eight percent will have their abortion in the first 12 weeks of the pregnancy. Sixty-nine percent of women who obtain abortions are low-income. Most women who have abortions are under 30, have children and are religious<sup>3</sup>.
- A study of women who wanted abortions but were unable to obtain them that women who were turned away<sup>4</sup>:
  - Had higher rates of hypertension and chronic pelvic pain
  - Were three times as likely to end up below the federal poverty line two years later
  - Furthermore, there was no evidence found between higher rates of depression or other mental health and obtaining an abortion.

### **In summary:**

- Women and families in New Orleans deserve quality, affordable and accessible healthcare. If adopted as proposed, the rules threaten to close clinics in Louisiana, denying women access to a legal procedure guaranteed and upheld by the United States Supreme Court.

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<sup>1</sup> CDC, "Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Abortion surveillance."

[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss6015a1.htm?s\\_cid=ss6015a1\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss6015a1.htm?s_cid=ss6015a1_w)

<sup>2</sup> CDC, "Pregnancy-related deaths." <http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/MaternalInfantHealth/Pregnancy-relatedMortality.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Guttmacher Institute, "Facts on Induced Abortion in the US" [http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb\\_induced\\_abortion.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html)

<sup>4</sup> Diana Greene Foster, "The Turnaway Study." <http://www.ansirh.org/research/turnaway.php>