



DONNA SEIDEL
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC LEADER

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Contact: Donna Seidel
608-266-0654

**WALKER ADMINISTRATION ENDS CONTRACT FOR WELL WOMAN
PROGRAM COORDINATORS WITHOUT INFORMING PATIENTS**

MADISON – The Department of Health Services (DHS) recently decided not to renew a contract with Planned Parenthood that funds coordinators for the Wisconsin Well Woman Program in the Fox Valley. Since 1995 the state has contracted with Planned Parenthood to enroll women in the Well Woman Program, answer questions, notify and schedule appointments, coordinate follow-up care, and help women diagnosed with cervical or breast cancer to seek treatment.

Assistant Democratic Leader Donna Seidel (D – Wausau) issued the following statement regarding the mismanagement of this decision:

“The Walker Administration’s plan to exclude Planned Parenthood from partnering with the Well Woman Program to coordinate care for cancer patients is yet another example in a long list of attacks on women this year.

“Yesterday we learned that Wisconsin lost 14,600 jobs in November but instead of making job creation the top priority, Republicans have focused their energy on a social agenda that is harming women and their families. Already this session they have restricted access to reproductive health care by limiting which clinics can provide services and the proposed BadgerCare cuts will only make it more difficult for women to get the care they need. In the coming months, there will be even more legislation advanced that inserts the government into the most personal and private decisions women should be making with their doctors and their families, not politicians.

“Continuing their deceptive and secretive ways, the Administration waited until last week to inform Planned Parenthood that the Well Woman contract would not be renewed for next year and DHS made no attempt to reach out to the county health departments. Even worse, DHS has yet to notify the more than 1,000 women in Winnebago, Outagamie, Fond du Lac and Sheboygan counties that they will no longer be able to count on the coordination services as of January 1, 2012.

“For more than 15 years, women have been able to depend on these Well Woman Program Coordinators to help them during a very difficult and scary time. Without Planned Parenthood as a partner, these counties do not have the infrastructure to help these patients, and they could be left to navigate a complicated system alone.

“I commend Sen. Jessica King (D – Oshkosh), Rep. Penny Bernard Schaber (D – Appleton) and Rep. Gordon Hintz (D – Oshkosh) for standing up for women in the Fox Valley. We all need to pay attention to the underhanded tactics the Walker Administration is using to attack women because no area of the state is immune. The Governor and Legislative Republicans are taking every opportunity to chip away at women’s health care in order to advance a much larger agenda. They have no interest in protecting women; instead they are taking away our rights.”

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85TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

STATE CAPITOL: P.O. Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708 ♦ (608) 266-0654 ♦ TOLL-FREE: 1-888-534-0085
FAX: (608) 282-3685 ♦ E-MAIL: rep.seidel@legis.wi.gov