



Testimony on
Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant and Social Services Block Grant
Appropriations, Public Health, and Human Services Committees
Public Hearing
August 7, 2025

The Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference supports the vast majority of the allocations requested in the block grant proposals before the various committees today. These proposals obviously address some very critical needs in our state and support much needed programs. The Conference, however, opposes continued ongoing and increasing funding to Planned Parenthood of Southern New England (PPSNE), such as the proposed allocations from the Maternal and Child Health Services and Social Services block grants.

The reason for our opposition is twofold. First, PPSNE's position as the number one abortion provider in Connecticut puts it in direct conflict with Catholic moral teachings and the beliefs of many taxpayers in our state. Second, although PPSNE would have everyone believe it is running on a shoestring budget and any reduction in state or federal funding would be a disaster for it and its clients, nothing could be further from the truth. These funds would be better spent assisting truly needy organizations.

A review of the PPSNE annual IRS 990 filings reveals that they are awash with cash and not financially needy. Despite its claims about fighting operating deficits and low Medicaid reimbursements, PPSNE has managed to accumulate a "rainy day" endowment fund valued at over \$49.5 million as of June 2024. **Since 2018, the endowment fund has increased by 287%.** Over 95% of the PPSNE endowment funds are unrestricted and can be allocated to any purpose, such as covering the costs of services for low-income clients, by its Board of Directors.

The public and elected officials never hear about this enormous fund when PPSNE is requesting more state aid. Instead, we hear about threats of cuts from the federal government and the low-income women who will lose life-saving medical care. Secrecy appears to be the norm regarding PPSNE's endowment fund. For example, when the Mackenzie Scott Foundation made a substantial \$17 million donation to PPSNE in 2022, PPSNE, for reasons unknown, PPSNE never publicly announced the gift and subsequently moved it directly into its endowment fund.

Instead of using some of its \$49.5 million endowment, PPSNE is always at the Capitol seeking a taxpayer handout and placing itself in competition with other truly needy nonprofits. Unfortunately, our legislators and Governor make every attempt to fulfill these requests, even if it means refusing funding needs of other programs which do not have such large financial resources.

Since 2024 the legislature and Governor have approved more than \$6.3 million in additional funding to PPSNE. Funds that could have been used to help the homeless, veterans, food insecure, and mentally ill. The additional funding to PPSNE includes:

- \$3 million in leftover American Rescue Plan Act funds, which was allocated in the 2024 budget adopted by the legislature to be used for general operating expenses
- \$500,000 increase in the federal Social Services Block Grant allocation made in January 2025 for family planning services
- \$800,000 in the emergency budget passed at the beginning of the 2025 legislative session for general operating expenses.
- More than \$2 million for the relocation of their New London facility in the bonding package authorized on April 11, 2025

The financial facts contained in the IRS filings also show that the salaries for the officers of PPSNE have grown significantly. Usually, struggling nonprofits restrain the salaries of their highest paid employees. This does not seem to be the trend at PPSNE. **Since 2018, the total salaries for its officers have grown by 88%.** This salary group includes the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Operations Officer (COO), Chief of Diversity and Inclusion, VP of Public Policy Advocacy, VP of Development, and other management team members. Most nonprofit officers are taking pay cuts or are managing with less. Not so at Planned Parenthood of Southern New England. The pay and benefits continue to be very generous.

The Conference urges the appropriate committees with oversight of the Social Services Block Grant and the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant to remove all funding directed to PPSNE. Under the Maternal and Child Health Services Block this includes \$18,487 in federal funds, and \$58,083 in proposed state funds to replace previous federal funds for reproductive health services. Under the Social Services Block Grant this includes \$1,424,718 for family planning services. The Social Services Block Grant Funds could be better used for childcare, child protective services, services for the elderly and disabled, or employment and training services. Funding from both these grant programs should be redirected to other priorities within these block grants to truly help maintain programs in need of financial support.

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