



From the Editor

As this Reporter goes to press, the plight of millions of women who lack access to reproductive health care and family planning is in danger of growing even more grave. With President Bush's reimposition of the Global Gag Rule and recent renegeing on funds to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the health and welfare of women—and men, children, and families—will deteriorate worldwide. But renegeing on promises is not just about questionable ethics, or about setting a bad example. As you know, the repercussions of evading our responsibilities with the UNFPA have real consequences. Consequences that you, as a Population Connection member, understand.

The problem of population is not a temporary one, nor is it trivial. But it seems that President Bush does not want to accept the fact that so many problems, both here and abroad, stem from unsustainable population growth—and his choice to withhold promised lifesaving funds. Depriving people of access to reproductive health care is hardly a small matter to those people who suffer the consequences. President Bush's choice will directly affect social and economic lives of millions, and for some, his decision will have as drastic an effect as deciding life or death. And, Bush's action has the disastrous long term effect of allowing population to grow unchecked, leading to even more negative consequences.

This special issue of The Reporter is about the mistakes that are currently being made by the Bush administration. Press reaction to withholding UNFPA funds was amazingly unanimous. From Boston to Pittsburgh, Atlanta to San Francisco, concerned writers spoke out about the inherent wrongness of President Bush's actions. Population Connection's Director of Government Relations, Brian Dixon, agreed to write about the problems that will result from the administration's heedless actions.

We'd also like you to know about some of our recent activities, so we've included information about our work in the field, on college campuses, in population education, in the media, and on Capitol Hill. And we also want to let you—our members—know how you can help in this battle. Capitol Hill Days is just around the corner. This training and advocacy event has become increasingly popular with our members, attracting activists and District Activist Network participants, as well as college students and young adults. But even if you can't make the event, the article tells you how to become involved as a sponsor. There is also an article on how to become a DAN member and how you can become the "voice" of Population Connection—and population stabilization—in your area.

Most importantly, however, this issue contains the Congressional Report Card for the upcoming elections. As you know, elections matter. It is vital—especially this year, when we have so much at stake—that everyone get out and make an educated vote. The situation in the U.S. House and Senate is tantalizingly close, and we have a chance to get more of our supporters to the House and the Senate. There are two things you can do to help out. Just remove the Congressional Report Card from the magazine and see how your candidates measure up on important population issues. And, while you're at it, take a second and remove the envelope in the magazine and send your contribution to Population Connection. The recent actions of this administration have spurred us on to work even harder for population stabilization—but we need your help to continue.

Lee S. Polansky
Editor