ABOUT BUSINESS FORWARD

Business Forward, a national trade association, works with more than 100,000 business leaders across the country, including more than 4,500 here in Ohio. We’ve organized hundreds of briefings on how to help women succeed in the workplace, provide for their families, and grow our economy.

Our leaders represent a range of industries and business sizes. It is a highly active, civic-minded, bipartisan group.

Six in 10 members of our network are women, and they are substantially more active than the men in our network. They also carry two-thirds or more of the household duties that come with raising children. Helping women advocate for affordable health care, climate action, sensible immigration laws, and other reforms is among our most significant accomplishments.

This report is part of a series on women’s progress in the workplace and the importance of reproductive health care to women’s careers, their families’ security, and America’s economic competitiveness. More than 200 Ohio business leaders have participated by signing a statement in support of reproductive health care, providing case studies and individual testimony, and participating in our briefings on developments in reproductive health care.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women are America’s largest potential driver of economic growth. By simply helping women match men’s labor force participation, we could grow our economy by $1 trillion. But women cannot realize their potential in the workplace if government makes it harder for them to plan when to have kids. Reproductive health is a critical, but often overlooked, service to working women.

1. After decades of gains, women’s progress in the workplace has stalled. They remain overrepresented in low-paying jobs, underrepresented in high-paying jobs, overworked at home, and undermined at the office.

2. The cost to women and their families is enormous. In the U.S. women earn 82 cents for every dollar men make, and 78 cents in Ohio. They are working 26.4% more hours per year than they did in 1980 to provide for their families.

3. The cost to our economy is also enormous. If women worked and earned at the rate men do, our economy would be $1 trillion bigger.

4. That’s why so many of our global competitors are helping women succeed at work. They invest three times more supporting working women than the U.S. does. The U.S., once a leader, now ranks 20th out of the world’s 22 advanced economies on women’s labor participation rate.

5. The Trump Administration, Republicans in Congress, and other officials here in Ohio are restricting reproductive health care and family planning services.
WOMEN’S PROGRESS IS STALLED, AND TODAY’S GENDER GAP = $1+ TRILLION IN LOST INCOME

Women who work full-time earn just 82% of what their male counterparts earn. Women earn less, in part, because they tend to work in jobs and industries that pay less. In other words, they are overrepresented in low-paying jobs and underrepresented in higher paying ones. They are also less likely to be promoted. For every 100 men promoted to manager, 79 women are. Closing the gap requires both (1) helping more women enter the workforce and (2) helping more women enter higher paying fields, like engineering.

Women experience lower labor force participation rates than men. Helping women match men’s participation rate would increase our GDP by 5-10%. McKinsey, S&P, and Citi estimate the impact of closing the gender gap is between $1 trillion and $1.6 trillion.
Women in Ohio who work full-time, year-round earn 78 cents for every dollar men with similar jobs earn.

Over a career that leads to a deficit of:

$459,080

At the current rate, women will not reach parity with men until:

2066

Women in Ohio earn 78 cents for every dollar men make.

The gap is larger for women of color:

LATINAS
$0.61
AFRICAN AMERICANS
$0.64

SMALL BUSINESSES

34% of Ohio businesses are women-owned.
Making contraception available to women who want it but could not otherwise afford it reduces the number of unplanned births, abortions, miscarriages, and babies born at low birth weight. Without publicly-supported family planning services, rates of unintended pregnancy and abortion in the U.S. would be 33% higher, and 23% higher in Ohio. Many of the women who require publicly-funded family planning services are young, nonwhite, low-income, or uninsured.18

For every $1 invested in publicly-supported family planning services, the government saves $7.09 in Medicaid expenditures. That’s because these services reduce reproductive cancers, STIs, and unintended births - all of which add to health care costs.21

In 2010, family planning services in Ohio saved the government23:

$227
MILLION
The rule prevents doctors, nurses and other Title X providers from informing patients about safe and legal access to abortion. It also blocks Title X funding from going to health centers that provide abortion services – regardless of how the funding is spent.

In 2018, the Trump Administration proposed a new gag rule policy for Title X that will affect the nearly 4 million people who rely on this program for affordable birth control and other related services.

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According to the Guttmacher Institute, Ohio, when compared to other states, is hostile to abortion rights:

- In 2017, 93% of Ohio counties had no clinics that provided abortions and 55% of Ohio women lived in those counties.
- Patients are required to receive counseling and wait 24 hours before procedure is performed.
- Health plans offered in the state’s health exchange under the ACA only cover abortion in cases of life endangerment to the women.
FEMALE EXECUTIVES SUPPORT ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

Business Forward conducted a survey with GBA Strategies and Bellwether Research & Consulting (December 2017). The poll surveyed 1,500 American women across age, race, professional status, educational attainment, geographic area, and political spectrum on their perspectives on the issues facing women in the workplace today.

Eighty-six percent of female executives believe that being able to time and plan parenthood is critical to a woman’s professional development and her family’s financial security – and 90% believe access to birth control is critical to family planning. There is significant evidence to support these beliefs. For example, 10% of the narrowing of the gender pay gap during the 1980s and 31% during the 1990s can be attributed to early access to the Pill.

Access to contraception helps women pursue higher degrees of education and establish in professional careers. The Pill accounted for more than 30% of the increase in the proportion of women in skilled careers from 1970 and 1990.

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**TIMING PARENTHOOD MATTERS**

**HOW IMPORTANT HAS THE ABILITY TO PLAN IF AND WHEN TO HAVE CHILDREN BEEN FOR YOUR ABILITY TO PURSUE YOUR PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER GOALS?**

(Percent that believe it is important)

- **EXECUTIVES**: 86%
- **TOTAL**: 75%

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**BIRTH CONTROL IS CRITICAL TO TIMING PARENTHOOD**

**HOW IMPORTANT HAS ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL BEEN IN YOUR ABILITY TO PLAN THE SIZE OF YOUR FAMILY?**

(Percent that believe it is important)

- **EXECUTIVES**: 90%
- **TOTAL**: 72%

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**LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND BIRTH CONTROL**

10% of the narrowing of the gender pay gap during the 1980s and 31% during the 1990s can be attributed to early access to the Pill.
FEMALE SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS SUPPORT ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE

Nearly one-third of small businesses are owned by women. Their 11 million businesses contribute $1.6 trillion to the U.S. economy each year. They are also more likely to provide health insurance to their employees than male small business owners. A survey of female small business owners by Small Business Majority (2018) demonstrates the importance of reproductive health care to their professional development and their families’ financial security.37

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

79% of female small business owners believe that access to reproductive health care is essential to women’s economic security and wellbeing.38

87% 88% 86%

FREEDOM TO PLAN FAMILIES

Across party lines, female small business owners believe that women should have the freedom to plan if and when to have children.39

FAMILY-FRIENDLY

Female small business owners generally support family-friendly policies.40

HELP WITH CHILD CARE EXPENSES

60%

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

69%

PAID SICK LEAVE

72%

They are also more likely to provide health care to their workers.

44%

32%

FEMALE SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS, AVERAGE
FOR WOMEN OF COLOR WHO FACE ADDITIONAL BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE, ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE IS CRITICAL

REPRESENTATION IN THE CORPORATE PIPELINE

Women of color face greater institutional barriers to promotion in the workplace, and that suggests access to reproductive health care matters more to their careers.

FREEDOM TO PLAN FAMILIES

How important has the ability to plan if and when to have children been for your ability to pursue your personal professional or career goals? (% that believe it’s important)

ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL AND HEALTH CARE

Women of color overwhelmingly support requiring insurance to cover birth control and making sure all women have coverage for routine medical care like mammograms and pap smears – even if they don’t have health insurance.

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ACCESS TO BIRTH CONTROL AND HEALTH CARE

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"If the U.S. expands women-friendly policies to the level of other European countries, the women's labor force participation rate could reach 82.0%."

— Blau & Kahn, National Bureau of Economic Research (2013)

Once a leader, the U.S. now ranks 20 out of 22 advanced economies in prime-age female labor participation.

In 2015, other OECD members spent more than three times more subsidizing family benefits (as a share of GDP) than the U.S.

"While Canada began adjusting public policies and business incentives over three decades ago, the U.S. is just recently considering solutions, and these initiatives seem far from implementation."

— Citi GPS, Women in the Economy II (November, 2017)

**OUR GLOBAL COMPETITORS SPEND THREE TIMES MORE SUPPORTING WOMEN — AND IT’S BOOSTING THEIR ECONOMIES**

**U.S. RANKING FOR LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE, 1990-2017**

- 6th in 1990
- 13th in 2000
- 17th in 2010
- 20th in 2017

**WOMEN’S LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE**

- U.S. = 66.2%
- CANADA = 74%

The reason Canadian women are much more likely to be in the workforce than their U.S. counterparts comes down to three decades of public policies and business incentives.

— BETH ANN BOVINO, S&P GLOBAL

"Our global competitors spend three times more supporting women — and it's boosting their economies."

— BETH ANN BOVINO, S&P GLOBAL
Dear Elected Officials,

Here’s what business leaders know: The freedom to plan our futures — including if and when to have children — is key to a woman’s professional and personal success. Without robust contributions from more than half the U.S. population, our workforce grinds to a halt — and so does economic growth.

Current U.S. policies pose a threat to the country’s economy and hurt national productivity. After decades of headway, gender equity has stalled. Even as women earn more college degrees, men earn more money. Women’s workforce participation in our country is almost dead last — ranking 20th — among 22 advanced global economies.

If we advanced policies that help women participate at the workforce rate men do, the U.S. economy would grow by an additional $1 trillion each year.

Instead of limiting access to women’s health care, public officials should support policies that allow working women to thrive. Protecting and expanding reproductive health care can drive economic growth. Our families will be more stable, our businesses more productive, and our workforce stronger.

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REFERENCES

For more resources on this topic see:


Center for American Progress - The Women's Leadership Gap.

Citi GPS - Women in the Economy II.

S&P - The Key to Unlocking U.S. GDP Growth: Women.

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