



## SOCIETY FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## Secular Humanistic Judaism Condemns Efforts to Defund Planned Parenthood; Mobilizes Local Communities to Support Reproductive Health Services

NEW YORK, NY—DECEMBER 13, 2016—The Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ), the congregational arm of the Secular Humanistic Judaism denominational movement, condemns the efforts at defunding of Planned Parenthood under the guise of not funding abortions and argues doing so disproportionately disadvantages low income women who have less access to affordable contraception and healthcare.

In a new resolution, the SHJ board affirms its commitment that “Public policy decisions should be based on facts and reason and not fabrications and manipulations of facts to support a religiously-derived agenda.” Federal funding of abortions is already disallowed unless the pregnancy threatens the woman’s life or was caused by rape or incest. Additional legislative initiatives are simply efforts to impose religious values and undermine the reproductive health of disadvantaged women.

“We are thrilled by the initiative taken by our members in local SHJ-affiliated communities to counter such efforts and demonstrate their Humanistic Jewish values through their support of Planned Parenthood,” said Dr. Richard Logan, President of the Society for Humanistic Judaism. “Humanistic Jews believe in personal dignity and choice. We desire to enhance individual autonomy regardless of financial means, and our Humanistic Jewish commitment to the separation of religion and government all motivate us to condemn efforts to defund Planned Parenthood.”

The SHJ resolution condemning efforts to defund Planned Parenthood points out that Planned Parenthood provides essential services to economically disadvantaged populations; less than 10% are related to abortion, which are not federally funded; and in regions where Planned Parenthood services are defunded, unwanted pregnancies increased. Therefore, “the most effective way to lower the unplanned pregnancy rate, and consequently the abortion rate, is to fund contraception and the other services Planned Parenthood provides.”

The full text of the resolution is available at [this link](#).

Interviews available upon request.

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**Secular Humanistic Judaism**, one of the five branches of Judaism, is a movement founded over fifty years ago that embraces a human-centered philosophy combining rational thinking with a deep connection to the Jewish people and its culture. Humanistic Jews celebrate Jewish holidays and life cycle events such as weddings and bar and bat mitzvah with inspirational, non-theistic ceremonies that draw upon but go beyond traditional symbols and liturgy. The Society for Humanistic Judaism (SHJ) is the central body for the Humanistic Jewish movement in North America. SHJ-affiliated congregations provide a safe-space for atheist and agnostic Jews, their family members of all backgrounds, and allies to continue to express and celebrate their Jewish identities.

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