

#Fight4HER

HEALTH EMPOWERMENT & RIGHTS





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Photo above courtesy of Women for Conservation in Colombia, a Global Partner of Population Connection

NOTE FROM REBECCA HARRINGTON

Senior Director of Advocacy and Outreach



Congress is a mess. As we approach the press deadline for this publication, the federal government is likely to shut down because House Republicans are allowing their most extreme wing to control the entire agenda. Every spending bill that came out of the House Appropriations Committee was largely a right-wing wish list filled with provisions attacking reproductive freedom, public education, and the human rights of LGBTQ people. Still, Republican “leaders” are unable to bring bills to the floor because of objections from people in their own party like Reps. Lauren Boebert (R-CO) and Matt Gaetz (R-FL). They are insisting that bills that are already too extreme to have any hope of passing the Senate should be made even more regressive.

Every congressional district matters to the red and blue distribution

of House and Senate seats, but some races are more competitive and therefore more consequential than others. We’ve selected six locations around the country where we’ve worked before to reinvigorate our #Fight4HER campaign. These are places where we have dedicated activists who have helped us influence races since 2016, which was when a now twice-impeached and four-times-indicted former president lost the popular vote but won enough electoral votes to set this country back by decades on reproductive rights, environmental protection, poverty alleviation, and countless other critical issues.

In the spring of 2022, voters saw what happens when bullies, misogynists, and gullible people pleasers hold tightly to the reins of power. The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* shocked the country and the world, but it shouldn’t have. As soon as Trump started appointing Supreme Court justices, the nationwide right to abortion was on its way out.

And it isn’t just abortion access in this country that’s being threatened. It’s the right to contraceptives. It’s investments in family planning programs across the country and around the world. And it’s the right of people everywhere to choose their

own destinies. The consequences of these actions are catastrophic. From climate change to poverty, hunger to water scarcity, maternal and child mortality to gender inequality, there’s barely a problem the world faces that isn’t exacerbated by denying people the right to make their own choices about whether, when, and with whom to have children.

The 257 million women around the world who want to prevent or delay pregnancy but have an unmet need for contraceptives can’t afford for us to let history repeat itself. That’s why our #Fight4HER campaign will be working in these key communities to raise the alarm and ensure that voters, public officials, and candidates all understand that reproductive freedom is central to building a stronger, safer, healthier world.

If you want to join us in our efforts over the coming year—especially if you live in one of our target locations (Phoenix, Tucson, Las Vegas, Manchester, NH, Columbus, OH, and the Lehigh Valley, PA)—please get in touch!

Rebecca Harrington
rebecca@popconnect.org

PHOENIX, ARIZONA

ENDORSED CANDIDATE:

REP. GREG STANTON (D)

By Victoria Wright
Director of Planned Giving

Using Arizona State University (ASU) as a launching point, the #Fight4HER campaign has developed and cultivated critical partnerships in the Phoenix community including with Planned Parenthood Generation Action at ASU and the Abortion Fund of Arizona.

Since 2017, #Fight4HER activists have advocated in Arizona for the permanent repeal of the Global Gag Rule and have cultivated relationships with lawmakers on both the state and federal level.



Rep. Greg Stanton (center-left) and State Rep. Athena Salman (center-right) receiving a petition delivery from #Fight4HER volunteers

Greg Stanton has been representing Arizona's 4th congressional district since January 2023 (he represented the 9th district from 2019–2023). Rep. Stanton has voted in favor of Population Connection Action Fund's position more than 90% of the time and has co-sponsored important bills such as the Global HER Act, the Abortion Is Health Care Everywhere Act, and the EACH Act. Since the beginning of his tenure in Congress, Rep. Stanton has vocally opposed the Global Gag Rule and has been a strong advocate for increased funding for international family planning programs, including to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). With Rep. Stanton's new role on the House Foreign Affairs Committee in the 118th Congress, he will be a direct advocate for repealing the Helms Amendment and permanently ending the Global Gag Rule.



Phoenix #Fight4HER campaign kick-off event



Activists collect petition signatures



Phoenix activists at the #Fight4HER Summit in 2019



Phoenix 2019 Summer of HER cohort of volunteer fellows

Why Phoenix?

As a competitive district in a critical swing state, Arizona’s 4th congressional district remains a top target for the #Fight4HER campaign. The 4th district is located entirely within Maricopa County—a hotbed of controversy during the 2020 race and a key district in the upcoming presidential election.

In 2024, Rep. Stanton faces a rematch against MAGA extremist Kelly Cooper (R). Cooper supports the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and he supports a complete ban on abortion rights, including in cases of rape or incest.

Rep. Stanton made clear that he will vote to restore the right to comprehensive reproductive health at the federal level. “I strongly support a woman’s right to make her own health care decisions, and I’ll continue to fight for it in Congress.”

By putting our resources into Arizona’s 4th congressional district, we are leveraging existing relationships in Phoenix and at ASU, helping a candidate who is strong on our issues and working to expand our grassroots network in a state with national electoral consequences.

TUCSON, ARIZONA

ENDORSED CANDIDATE:

KIRSTEN ENGEL (D)

By YoVanna Solomon
Senior Field & Outreach Fellow

Tucson is home to one of the most competitive House seats in the nation. It's flipped party hands multiple times in the past two decades. The seat was held by Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D)—a great friend of Population Connection Action Fund and #Fight4HER—until she chose not to seek re-election in 2022.

This is one of 18 districts across the country that voted for Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election and is currently represented in Congress by a Republican.



Imani Cruz volunteering at a #Fight4HER table for SheDecides Day 2020

In one of the closest elections of 2022, Republican Juan Ciscomani defeated Kirsten Engel by only 1.5 percentage points. Ciscomani campaigned as a moderate but has been anything but since being sworn in earlier this year. Put on the Appropriations Committee, he has joined with the extreme wing of his party to support efforts to reinstate the Global Gag Rule, slash funding for family planning and reproductive health programs, eliminate the Title X domestic family planning program, and advance a host of other appalling policies.

Former State Representative and State Senator Kirsten Engel is running for southern Arizona's 6th congressional district again in 2024. Ms. Engel is an environmental attorney and law professor who has spent her career fighting to protect people's health from environmental hazards, including greenhouse gas emissions, and to preserve natural resources for future generations. During her recent term as an Arizona state senator, Ms. Engel consistently voted in alignment with Population Connection Action Fund's priorities to expand access to birth control, protect abortion rights, provide comprehensive sex education in public schools, and defend transgender students' rights. As Arizona's hostile Republican Legislature waged an assault on abortion rights and voting rights, Kirsten Engel took a stand to protect our democracy.

“[W]hat we are seeing from the congressional Republicans—and Juan Ciscomani is in there supporting them—they are attacking access to abortion, they are rolling back our efforts to fight the climate crisis, and work which is fundamental to working on our water issues. ... We need to take this seat back and put somebody in there—me—who will fight for our freedom to choose when, if, and how to start a family.”

—Kirsten Engel

Why Tucson?

With bases at the University of Arizona and Pima Community College and working in collaboration with Mission for Arizona, our earlier Tucson #Fight4HER campaign established strong community ties, thanks in large part to a cohort of 10 top volunteers whose leadership and commitment fueled its success. These volunteers, plus the dozens they recruited, consistently turned out during weekly phonebanks—in all, 50 volunteers talked to nearly 1,200 voters over 200 hours!

Once elected, Kirsten Engel will fight to restore and expand access to reproductive health care for all, regardless of where they live or how much money they have at their disposal. She will support Arizonans, and all Americans, in the ways Rep. Ciscomani hasn't.



Tucson activists Vanessa Addison and Ron Cole petitioning at the University of Arizona in 2020



Tucson organizer Kristen Godfrey (right) with activists at a protest marking the anniversary of Trump's Global Gag Rule in 2019



Tucson organizer Leigh Moyer (fourth from left) and activists at the #Fight4HER spring kick-off in 2020

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

ENDORSED CANDIDATES:

SEN. JACKY ROSEN (D)
REP. DINA TITUS (D)
REP. SUSIE LEE (D)
REP. STEVEN HORSFORD (D)

By Brian Dixon
Senior Vice President
for Governmental and Political Affairs

As the base for three competitive U.S. House races and two of the swingiest Senate seats in the country, it's clear that what happens in Las Vegas does not, in fact, stay in Las Vegas.

#Fight4HER has been working with volunteers there since 2017 and has built strong relationships with all of the key officials on the ballot next year.



Sen. Jacky Rosen with #Fight4HER organizer Emily Brzozowski



Rep. Dina Titus with #Fight4HER organizer Mary Iacono



Rep. Susie Lee with #Fight4HER organizer Emily Brzozowski



Rep. Steven Horsford (Bill Clark/CQ-Roll Call, Inc via Getty Images)

In 2024, three of Nevada's four House seats, currently held by Dina Titus (1st), Susie Lee (3rd), and Steven Horsford (4th), and the Senate seat held by Jacky Rosen, will be on the ballot. In 2022, when Catherine Cortez Masto was declared the winner of her Nevada Senate race, it sealed a Democratic majority to counter the extremism coming from the House. As in 2022, the outcome of these four elections could determine which party controls the House and the Senate in 2025. That is far too important to leave to chance.



#Fight4HER organizer Emily Brzozowski and Las Vegas activists dropping 800 petitions off at former Sen. Dean Heller's (R) office in 2018

Rep. Dina Titus, as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, has led efforts to end the Global Gag Rule forever and ensure that reproductive rights and family planning access are crucial components of U.S. foreign policy and assistance.

Rep. Susie Lee serves on the crucial House Appropriations Committee, which controls the funding for family planning and reproductive health programs across the United States and around the world. She has become an outspoken champion for these programs and fights for real investment and for policies to increase access to essential services.

And while not on the key committees in the House, Rep. Horsford is a reliable supporter of family planning and reproductive health programs.

In the Senate, Jacky Rosen has been a key leader in the fight to protect reproductive health care. She has co-sponsored each iteration of the Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights (HER) Act, and joined with her fellow Nevadan Sen. Cortez Masto to introduce the Freedom to Travel for Health Care Act to prevent state governments from interfering with the right of people to travel between states for the purpose of receiving legal abortion care.

Why Las Vegas?

With multiple colleges and universities in the Las Vegas area, #Fight4HER has an opportunity to build a strong grassroots campaign that highlights the enormous benefits that investment in family planning provides to families, communities, and countries—and the harm that abortion bans and other restrictions on care cause.

Politics isn't a game. Working with activists, members, and supporters in Las Vegas, we're going to make sure that voters, officials, and candidates understand that family planning and reproductive freedom aren't up for negotiation.

MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

ENDORSED CANDIDATES:

REP. CHRIS PAPPAS (D)
REP. ANNIE KUSTER (D)

By Victoria Wright
Director of Planned Giving

New Hampshire has long held a unique place in American politics. Its tradition as the home of the first presidential primary is undergoing some change, as Democrats have decided to hold their first primary of 2024 in South Carolina. What is unlikely to change, though, is the importance of face-to-face retail politics in both elections and policy debates. It's a small state but has an enormous impact. It remains the quintessential swing state at both the presidential and congressional levels. And the outcome of elections here often mirrors the outcome nationally.



Rep. Chris Pappas with #Fight4HER organizer Amy McCall

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen is the lead sponsor of the Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights (HER) Act, the bill to permanently end the odious Global Gag Rule and the inspiration for the name of our #Fight4HER campaign. Her partner in the Senate, Maggie Hassan, has joined as a co-sponsor. Each has won elections by narrow margins. In the House, elections are equally tight.

Reps. Annie Kuster, first elected in 2012, and Chris Pappas, who came to Congress in 2018, are solid supporters of reproductive health programs. Annie Kuster represents New Hampshire's 2nd congressional district. She has been a co-sponsor of the Global HER Act in every session of Congress since she's been in office, and she's also been a champion of legislation to protect everyone's right to abortion access. She is a reliable supporter of the #Fight4HER agenda.



Attendees of the #Fight4HER New Hampshire Summer of HER Summit in 2018



Rep. Chris Pappas (center)



Activists doing GOTV work



Rep. Chris Pappas (center) was the keynote speaker at the 2019 New England (New Hampshire and Maine) Summer of HER Summit

Chris Pappas represents New Hampshire’s 1st congressional district, which covers the southeastern part of the state. Rep. Pappas was first elected in 2018, with the help of #Fight4HER organizers who completed 283 volunteer hours and contacted over 1,000 voters throughout the state. Since his election, Rep. Pappas has been a friend of #Fight4HER and a champion of global reproductive rights—he is an original co-sponsor of the Global HER Act, the Reproductive Rights Are Human Rights Act, and the Support UNFPA Funding Act. He is outspoken on the need for a permanent repeal of the Global Gag Rule and remains a critical ally in Congress.

Why Manchester?

New Hampshire is one of the country’s few remaining swing states, and the GOP has made it a top target in the 2024 elections. The 1st and 2nd congressional districts both cover parts of greater Manchester, the state’s most populated area.

Voters in New Hampshire will have an outsized say in the future of global family planning programs, and it will always be an important state for building grassroots campaigns. That’s why the Granite State is a priority for our #Fight4HER campaign. By putting our resources into New Hampshire, we are leveraging existing relationships, helping candidates who are strong on our issues, and working to expand our grassroots network in a state with national electoral consequences.

COLUMBUS, OHIO

ENDORSED CANDIDATES:

SEN. SHERROD BROWN (D)
REP. JOYCE BEATTY (D)

By Rebecca Harrington
Senior Director of Advocacy and Outreach

Columbus, Ohio, is home to the third largest university in the United States. The Ohio State University (OSU) has more than 61,000 students—a grassroots presence here extends our reach to every part of the state. The large and active student-led Global Health Initiative has been a partner to Population Connection Action Fund and the #Fight4HER campaign for years.

We've been organizing in Columbus for over a decade, using OSU as the hub. The city's vibrant, progressive community of activists and organizations makes it the perfect place to rally support for reproductive freedom and investment in family planning programs around the world.



Rep. Joyce Beatty (center) with #Fight4HER activists

Rep. Joyce Beatty represents the 3rd congressional district and is a champion of reproductive freedom. A co-sponsor of the Global HER Act, she has also strongly supported increasing international family planning funding, supporting UNFPA, and protecting *Roe. v. Wade*. Rep. Beatty gave the keynote address at our virtual Summer of HER Summit in 2020, delivering a rousing speech about fighting for reproductive rights and the power within #Fight4HER's young activists.



#Fight4HER staff, activists, and local Columbus elected officials at the Summer of HER Summit in 2019



Global Gag Rule anniversary protest in January 2020

Sen. Sherrod Brown is a dedicated defender of reproductive freedom who faces a challenging re-election campaign in 2024. A progressive fighter who prioritizes the needs of Ohioans first and foremost, he also has a glowing record on global reproductive health and rights. He has tirelessly supported measures to codify *Roe v. Wade* and prevent travel restrictions on abortion, and he pushed the Biden administration to declare a public health emergency following the Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. He's an original co-sponsor of the Global HER Act and a champion for greater investment in international family planning and support for UNFPA.

Why Columbus?

In the lead-up to the 2020 general election, #Fight4HER organizers were deeply plugged into political campaigns in Ohio, recruiting 87 volunteers who spoke with more than 11,000 voters, contributing crucial people power to the victories of Rep. Joyce Beatty, Sen. Sherrod Brown, and President Joe Biden.

Working in Columbus gives us the opportunity, through the university, to connect with students from across the state. Several groups with chapters at OSU in addition to the Global Health Initiative, mentioned above, have made organizing on campus more impactful. These groups include Period, the College Democrats, Take Back the Night, Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio, and URGE (Unite for Reproductive and Gender Equity).

We're grateful to have such a strong base of support in Columbus and can't wait to get back to organizing there!

LEHIGH VALLEY, PENNSYLVANIA

ENDORSED CANDIDATE:

REP. SUSAN WILD (D)

By John Seager
President and CEO

Pennsylvania's 7th congressional district was forged in steel and has been steeped in hard work. The Lehigh Valley was long the headquarters of Bethlehem Steel along with Mack Trucks and Lehigh Cement. Times have changed, but our #Fight4HER volunteers display the hard work and determination that this region has long valued.



Organizer CB Chadwick (left) and Rep. Susan Wild (second from right) with two #Fight4HER activists from the Lehigh Valley

As the first woman to represent her district in Congress, Susan Wild is dedicated to the tough, grinding work of smashing barriers that prevent people from choosing their own destinies. As the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, Rep. Wild leads the effort to defend reproductive rights against attacks from Chairman Chris Smith, the archfoe of choice in Congress.



Volunteers Michaela, Patrick, and Emma (front) with interested students at a tabling event in 2020 at Muhlenberg College



Rep. Susan Wild (center) with organizer Haylee Becker (right) and a #Fight4HER activist (left) at Lehigh Valley Pride 2019



#Fight4HER activists at a "Honk 4 Choice" rally in January 2020 to commemorate the anniversary of Trump signing the Global Gag Rule

Here's what Rep. Wild had to say about the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* by the Supreme Court:

“This ruling is a gut punch to women of all ages, races, and economic circumstances. ... Overturning Roe means that every single member of the Court that joins this opinion will have outright lied during their confirmation hearings in which they affirmed that Roe is settled law. In a much more practical sense, it means they will stop at nothing to achieve their dystopian vision of a society in which citizens are fundamentally not equal. ... The answer is to mobilize, organize, and fight back.”



Left to right: fellow Dayana Bailey, organizer Haylee Becker, Tuesday with Toomey volunteer Curt Doll, and Senior Field Coordinator Lindsay Apperson dropping off 1,200 petitions at the office of former Sen. Pat Toomey (R) urging him to support the Global HER Act

Why the Lehigh Valley?

Susan Wild won her last House race in this perennial battleground district by a razor-thin margin. Once again, Population Connection Action Fund's #Fight4HER campaign will mobilize, organize, and fight to do everything we can to ensure that she is re-elected. We will recruit and engage students at Lehigh University and other local campuses and galvanize support throughout Rep. Wild's district so that this tenacious champion of choice can continue her leadership in Congress.

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Population Connection Action Fund fights to elect candidates who understand that investment in family planning around the world improves the health and well-being of all. These vital programs are constantly under attack by politicians in the United States. Together, we can ensure universal, affordable access to family planning the world over.

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