Spotlight on Women’s Health

• **President Obama expands women’s access to preventative services.** Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), most health insurance plans will cover women’s preventive services – including well women visits, and domestic violence screenings – without charging a co-pay or deductible.1[1] This new law will save money for millions of Americans and ensure Americans nationwide get the high-quality care they need to stay healthy.2[2] The President also passed landmark health care reform. The Affordable Care act expanded health care coverage to 32 million Americans.3[3] Now young adults can be covered by their parents’ insurance plans until age 26, and 2.5 million young adults have already taken advantage of this provision of the law.4[4] It also stops insurance companies from denying coverage based on preexisting conditions or dropping individuals when they get sick.5[5]

• **Romney promises to eliminate key women’s health programs.** “Number one on my list: Obamacare – I’ll get rid of that on day one.”6[6] Romney has made continued pledges to eliminate the Affordable Care Act (ACA) during the campaign. Before the ACA became law, women could be charged more for individual insurance policies because of their gender. The ACA also guarantees mandatory maternity coverage for all women, as well as recommended preventive services including PAP tests, mammograms, new baby care and well-child visits, with no out-of-pocket costs. Romney has also pledged to “eliminate Title X family planning programs”7[7] Title X covers reproductive health services including birth control, STD screenings, and cervical-cancer exams for low-income women.

• **Santorum invents facts, slams the ACA.** Santorum recently claimed “ties [between] cancer and abortion”8[8] (ties which have been disproved in peer-reviewed studies). These statements follow a string of comments opposing women’s healthcare advances. Discussing the popular components of the ACA – including requiring coverage for women regardless of preexisting conditions (including pregnancy) – Santorum said “That’s something that everybody thinks is so popular,” he said. “But it also leads to enormous cost.”9[9] Echoing Romney, Santorum’s “Priority number 1 = repeal ObamaCare.”10[10] Santorum’s proposed alternatives include no additional rules to protect the ACA’s protected coverage for women.

NEA Believes

• Affordable, comprehensive health care is the right of every resident. President Obama’s historic

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legislation moves the country closer to more comprehensive health care coverage; controlling costs while assuring quality; emphasizing preventative care; and assuring greater equity in the funding and access of that health care. The Affordable Care Act has opened up preventative care services to an estimated 54 million Americans, including 20 million women. 11[11]

- Additional federal resources should be devoted to the study of women’s health related issues as well as ensuring that all women have access to full coverage of their reproductive health care needs.