

Continued From Page 1-D
ally, Medicaid covers millions of mothers and more than one-third of all children.

But in the conservative House budget, Medicaid was targeted for deep budget cuts and converted into capped block grants to states. Medicaid still faces threats as the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction deliberates and identifies at least an additional \$1.2 trillion in budget cuts.

Title X, The National Family Planning Program (1970), is the only dedicated source of federal funding for family planning services in the United States. Title X provides family planning and other preventive health care to more than 5 million low-income and uninsured women who may

otherwise lack access to health care.

For the first time in history, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to completely defund Title X in 2011. Nine states have reduced family planning funding through legislative action and one (New Jersey) has eliminated it through the governor's veto.

Title IX of the Education Amendments prohibits sex discrimination in federally funded education programs or activities. Title IX greatly expanded equal access to college education, professional and graduate schools and dramatically increased equal access to sports opportunities so that today girls and women represent over 40 percent of all college and high school athletes.

Title IX also plays a vital role in increasing gender equity in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education by improving the climate for women in those fields. Yet a combination of administrative budget cuts, regulations, private school vouchers schemes, and pressure from congressional opponents threatens to weaken enforcement of Title IX.

The 1994 Violence Against Women created the first U.S. federal legislation acknowledging the severity of crimes related to domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and violence against women.

VAWA will expire at the end of 2011 unless it is reauthorized. The law needs to be updated and strengthened, including the addition of pro-

visions that will help protect students on campus who are consistently subject to sexual harassment, assault and violence. Despite this, no action has yet been taken to ensure VAWA is reauthorized.

The Affordable Care Act of 2010 covers maternity care, eliminates pre-existing conditions and prevents health plans from charging women more than men for the same coverage. ACA also covers well-woman preventive health services, such as an annual well-woman visit, contraceptives, mammograms, cancer screenings, prenatal care and counseling for domestic violence, as basic health care for women at no additional cost and includes the first federal ban on sex discrimination in health care programs and

activities. Combined with other provisions, the ACA is an historic step forward for women's health and economic security.

But in another threat to women's health, the House of Representatives voted to repeal the ACA. Conservative senators, state legislators and governors have also pledged to repeal ACA and deny women, of all ages, critical preventive care services.

The St. Lawrence County Branch of AAUW will continue to educate voters about issues of concern to all Americans. Membership in the St. Lawrence County Branch is open to anyone who supports the mission of AAUW.

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and

research. AAUW's commitment to educational equity is reflected in its public policy advocacy, community programs, leadership development, conventions and conferences, national partnerships and international connections.

For more information about AAUW locally, contact President Becky Gerber at 268-9957 or gerberrl@potdam.edu or Public Policy Chair Kathleen Stein at 386-3812 or kstein1@twcny.rr.com.

AAUW, with its nationwide network of more than 100,000 members, more than 1,000 branches conducting programs in communities across the country, and 500 college and university partners, has been a leading advocate for equity and education for women and girls since 1881.