

Clinic Violence is a Reproductive Justice Issue

January 21, 2016—Based on data recently released by the Feminist Majority Foundation, “harassment, intimidation, and threats against abortion providers have nearly doubled, with the percentage of clinics impacted increasing from 26.6% in 2010 to 51.9% in 2014.” In Our Own Voice joined Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD) and several other state and national advocates at the National Press Club on January 21, 2016, to speak out against clinic violence, and to urge the House Select Investigative Panel to turn their focus and address anti-abortion violence, or disband altogether.

In Our Own Voice was represented by Michelle Batchelor, Deputy Director, provided the following comments:

- No one is more affected by clinic violence than the poor, young and women of color, and with Black women 55 percent more likely to be uninsured than white women, we need the services that are being provided by these very clinics that are being targeted for violence.
- Restricting access to clinics and harassing patients infringes upon our human right to live our lives with dignity, and to make the choices that are best for us as Black women, our families and our communities. To do so has the direct impact of increased rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), reproductive cancers and unintended pregnancies, among Black women.
- In a 2013 opinion poll 85 percent of Black women and men agreed that “when it comes to abortion, we should trust Black women to make the important personal decisions that are best for themselves and their families.”
- Clinic violence and the over 318 state laws that have been passed since 2010, making it harder for women to access abortion care, are yet more examples of people that do not look like us, live in our communities, or know our lived experiences trying to influence and shame us for the choices we make regarding our reproductive health.
- Women deserve the right to unobstructed access to safe and affordable reproductive health services so that we can make the best decisions for our bodies, our families and our communities.

The press conference at the National Press Club was one of several events occurring over two days hosted by the Feminist Majority Foundation, the National Organization for Women, DC NOW, Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, and the Women’s Information Network.