

Nation Institute for Reproductive Health

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This is the message sent and the attachments.

ATTENTION: This email originated from outside of the City of Billings. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and are expecting the contents.

Dear Councilwomen [Penny] Ronning,

On behalf of the National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH), I am emailing regarding the upcoming publication of the *Local Reproductive Freedom Index (Local Index)*. **The Local Index evaluates the reproductive health, rights, and justice policies of 50 cities and counties across the United States.** Billings and Yellowstone County is one of ten cities that are new additions to this year's *Local Index*. The measures in this report were selected because they reflect a city's commitment to its residents' ability to access the full range of health care, including abortion; to choose if, when, and how to start and raise a family; and to make real and informed choices about their reproductive health. The *Local Index's* goals are to provide policymakers and advocates with easy-to-understand information about their community, spotlight innovative policies, and elevate the importance of local government **in improving the health and well-being of women and families in their communities**. The first edition of this report was issued in 2017, and you can review it in full at www.localrepro.org. We plan to release this edition of the *Local Index* in Fall 2019.

For the past several months, we have been evaluating Billings and Yellowstone County's policies through original research and, when possible, **interviews with local advocates**. Attached you will find a confidential draft of Billings and Yellowstone County's profile based on that research. **We would like to offer you and your staff the opportunity to review the profile for accuracy by Friday, May 24th, 2019.**

To facilitate this process for you, you can provide feedback in any of the following ways:

- *By phone:* please schedule a call with us using Calendly at <https://calendly.com/aorr-nirh/feedback> or email aorr@nirhealth.org to find a time that works for you. For calls after May 21st, please click here: <https://calendly.com/jmistry/lrficall1> to schedule
- *By email:* submit any feedback or edits toaorr@nirhealth.org. Please include your city or county name in the subject line of the email

Attached you will find:

- an overview of the *Local Reproductive Freedom Index* and our research process
- the 2017 Local Index Comprehensive Scorecard
- research spreadsheet for Billings and Yellowstone County, which we request that you review
- guidance on each of the indicators to assist with your review

We have also sent this information to you by mail.

If you feel that anything in the spreadsheet is inaccurate, we would greatly appreciate it if you would provide a correction as well as a referable source for our record keeping.

Finally, while we invite you to discuss this with your colleagues and with anyone who you think might be able to help us verify this information, **we ask that you otherwise keep this research confidential until its launch.** If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me directly at 646-520-3514 or jmistry@nirhealth.org.

We have also sent this information to the following agencies in Billings and Yellowstone County:

- The Office of Mayor Cole
- Yellowstone County Board of Commissioners

NIRH is an organization that works from the ground up, investing in states and cities to change public policy, galvanize public support, and normalize women's decisions about abortion and contraception. If you would like more information about NIRH, please contact me or visit us online at www.nirhealth.org.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Best,

Jenny Dodson Mistry, MPH

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