FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUBJECT: Columbia Law School’s Public Rights/Private Conscience Project Co-hosts a Capitol Hill Briefing To Highlight The Impact That Religious Health Care Refusals Have On Women of Color

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New York, May 23, 2018: Columbia Law School’s Public Rights/Private Conscience Project and the National Women’s Law Center will host a Capitol Hill Briefing at 10:15am, Thursday, May 24th to discuss the impact of religious health care refusals on women of color. The event, entitled Devalued, Turned Away, and Refused Health Care: What Happens to Women of Color When Religion Dictates Patient Care, will be presented in cooperation with Senator Kamala Harris and Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman.

Pregnant women of color, particularly black and Latina women, are at greater risk of being deprived of a range of reproductive health services in many U.S. states as a result of their disproportionate use of Catholic hospitals, according to the report Bearing Faith: The Limits of Catholic Health Care for Women of Color. The report, which was published earlier this year by the Public Rights/Private Conscience Project in partnership with Public Health Solutions, analyzes racial disparities in birth rates at hospitals that place religious restrictions on health care. The Trump Administration’s consistent efforts to expand religious health care refusals threaten to exacerbate the impact of these refusals on the health and well-being of women of color.

This Thursday’s briefing will include remarks from experts in the field of reproductive justice, racial justice, and public health, including Kira Shepherd, Director of the Racial Justice Program with the Public Rights/Private Conscience Project, Professor Lori Freedman of the University of California, San Francisco; Naomi Washington-Leapheart, Faith Work Director for of the National LGBTQ Task Force; Toni Bond Leonard, a Reproductive Justice expert and Religious Scholar; Candace Gibson, Staff Attorney with the National Health Law Program, and Fatima Goss Graves, President and CEO of the National Women’s Law Center.

This event is free and open to the public and the press. Registration is required, via the National Women’s Law Center at the following URL: https://bit.ly/2L9QQx1.