



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

October 2, 2023

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Ethan Carrier, Esq.
General Counsel
New York City Conflicts of Interest Board
2 Lafayette Street, Suite 1010
New York, NY 10007

Re: COIB Rules §1-13(e)(1) Designation for Carmina Bernardo to the
Board of National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association

Dear Mr. Carrier:

This letter serves to notify the Conflicts of Interest Board (“COIB”) that, in accordance with COIB Rules §1-13(e)(1), I hereby designate Carmina Bernardo, in her official capacity as Deputy Director of Provider Partnerships at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”), to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (“NFPRHA”), a not-for-profit corporation. NFPRHA’s mission is to advance and elevate the importance of family planning and sexual health in the nation’s health care system and to promote and support the work of family planning providers and administrators, especially in the safety net. NFPRHA’s membership includes nearly 1,000 members that operate or fund more than 3,500 health centers that deliver high-quality family planning education and preventative care to millions of people every year in the United States.

As the Deputy Director of Provider Partnerships, Ms. Bernardo identifies and engages with clinical partners in New York City who play an important role in assuring access to abortion and sexual/reproductive health (“SRH”) services, as well as collaborates with them to understand and describe the volume and capacity in New York City reproductive health sites. Additionally, Ms. Bernardo supports communications to providers and patients to help facilitate abortion access; convenes providers to uncover barriers and limitations to effective service provision and use existing data to help overcome those roadblocks; and cultivates relationships with national, state, and city stakeholders around issues that impact how patients seek and access abortion and other SRH service providers.

There is a clear nexus between Ms. Bernardo’s work as the Deputy Director of Provider Partnerships and service on the Board of Directors of NFPRHA. In her DOHMH capacity, Ms. Bernardo is responsible for building provider relationships with the goal of protecting and expanding abortion access, which is a DOHMH

priority. As a board member representing the advancement of family planning and sexual health, Ms. Bernardo will promote New York City's innovative policies and best practices regarding protecting and promoting access to abortion care and other SRH services to more audiences, especially as local governmental and non-governmental organizations grapple with how to ensure abortion access amid growing state restrictions. Therefore, as a representative for DOHMH, serving on the NFPRHA's Board provides the opportunity to be a key advocate in protecting and promoting the SHR of New Yorkers by engaging with other Board members and NFPRHA membership to share abortion access strategies.

I have been advised that Ms. Bernardo does not anticipate or foresee any conflicts between her day-to-day responsibilities at DOHMH and involvement with NFPRHA's Board. The Board meets quarterly for in-person, full-board meetings and quarterly for virtual committee meetings. Ms. Bernardo anticipates spending about eight hours per month fulfilling her NFPRHA Board duties. I support Ms. Bernardo serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I also request that Ms. Bernardo be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies, and resources for her participation with NFPRHA as part of her City duties.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Karrie Ann Sheridan, Deputy Director of the Employment Law Unit at (347) 396-6015.

Sincerely,



Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD
Commissioner

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cc: Lisa Landau, General Counsel
Karrie Ann Sheridan, Deputy Director ELU