

ABORTION FUNDS: PROVIDING CRITICAL SUPPORT TO WOMEN IN NEED

“**L.B. is a 30-year-old woman with a school-aged daughter. In December 2008, she was laid off from her job at a medical office.** Since then, unable to find another job, she enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [food stamps] and is spending down her savings account to pay her rent and other living expenses. **L.B.** had been using a hormonal contraceptive, so she was surprised to find herself pregnant. She borrowed from her uncle toward the cost of her abortion. [The Women’s Medical Fund] provided \$100 to fill the remaining gap.”

— An account shared by the executive director of the Women’s Medical Fund²⁴

In response to the lack of public funding for abortion, the 100-plus member groups of the **National Network of Abortion Funds** raise money to help thousands of poor women cover the cost of their abortions²⁵ and, in many cases, provide supplemental services. Most abortion Funds are run by volunteers and raise money from private individuals and foundations to provide grants to women needing financial assistance.²⁶ Aside from helping women cover the cost of abortion care, many abortion Funds also help women pay for emergency contraception, offer women additional information, and provide support services such as

transportation to a clinic, housing for women traveling long distances, meals, gas money, child-care during the procedure, and assistance obtaining medications. Some Funds also advocate on behalf of women with individual clinics or, in states where Medicaid pays for most abortions, help women to enroll in Medicaid and provide information on how to obtain social services.²⁷ **Abortion Funds in the Network** also conduct advocacy for expanded public funding of abortion.²⁸ In addition to the Network, organizations such as **Planned Parenthood and the National Abortion Federation** help low-income women pay for abortion services.²⁹