

November 27th, 2017

The Honorable Donald Trump
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

As organizations committed to advancing reproductive health, rights, and justice, and related social justice causes, we believe that each of us should be able to make decisions about pregnancy and parenting that are best for our families, without political interference. However, since the first passage of the Hyde Amendment began in 1976, anti-abortion policy makers have continually enacted bans on health coverage and funding for abortion that push this decision out of reach for many, particularly those struggling to make ends meet.

We are asking you to eliminate the Hyde Amendment, as well as related abortion coverage and care restrictions, from your fiscal year 2019 Budget. The current federal restrictions on abortion coverage and care have a far-reaching impact on people enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare; federal employees and their dependents; Peace Corps Volunteers; Native Americans; people in federal prisons and immigration detention centers; and residents of the District of Columbia. Together, these bans restrict the health coverage of at least 7 million women, over half of whom are women of color.¹

Withholding coverage for abortion care creates profound hardships for people across the country, particularly for those who already face significant barriers to receiving basic, quality healthcare, such as low-income women, immigrant women, young women, women of color, people with disabilities, and transgender and gender-nonconforming people.

For many, coverage for abortion care means the difference between getting the healthcare they need and being denied that care. Restrictions on federal funding force approximately one in four Medicaid-eligible women who would have had an abortion if funds were available to carry the pregnancy to term.² The impact of such a denial can have long-term, devastating effects on a woman and her family's economic future. A recent study found that a woman who seeks but is denied abortion care is more likely to fall into poverty than a woman who is able to get the care she needs.³

Each of us should be able to live, work, and make decisions about our health, and our future with dignity in order to strengthen our economic security. Yet, for too long, low-income women and women of color have shouldered the burden of our country's restrictive reproductive health laws. And today, low-income women and women of color are bearing the brunt of a mass of harmful policies from your administration, such as the revocation of DACA protections, or the proposed rollbacks of food and housing assistance programs in your budget. And, this administration has taken action that would strip healthcare away from millions and deny low-income people access to Planned Parenthood. We won't stand by while you play politics with people's lives. We will be here to fight every step of the way.

¹ Boonstra, Heather D. Abortion in the Lives of Women Struggling Financially: Why Insurance Coverage Matters. Guttmacher Policy Review. Vol. 19, 2016. Available at: https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/article_files/gpr1904616_0.pdf

² Henshaw, S.K., Joyce T., Dennis, A., Finer, L.B., and Blanchard, K. "Restrictions on Medicaid Funding for Abortions: A Literature Review." Guttmacher Institute. Jul 2009. Available at <http://bit.ly/2dh6DIY>

³ Foster DG, Dobkin LM, Upadhyay UD. "Denial of abortion care due to gestational age limits." *Contraception*.2013;87(1):3 5. <http://bit.ly/2efDno4>

A powerful movement led by young people, communities of color, and reproductive and economic justice advocates, is calling for the end of these obstacles to abortion care. In 2015, members of the House of Representatives, led by Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA-13), joined this movement and took a significant step forward by introducing the Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH Woman) Act (H.R. 771) – bold legislation to reverse the Hyde Amendment and related abortion coverage restrictions. Passage of the EACH Woman Act would mean, politicians can no longer be able to deny a woman abortion coverage based on her income, type of insurance, or zip code.

Despite anti-abortion rhetoric, abortion coverage bans are not widely supported. Polling data released in July 2015⁴ and 2016⁵ shows a majority of voters support policies that would lift the Hyde Amendment and ensure that Medicaid covers all pregnancy-related care, including abortion. Support for lifting the Hyde Amendment is especially strong among Millennials, African Americans, and Latinxs.

We urge you to eliminate all abortion coverage bans from your FY2019 budget, so all people, however little money they make, type of insurance they have, or where they live, are better able to decide when and how to start a family. This would be one step in the direction of listening to the needs of our communities, instead of targeting them with harmful policies.

Sincerely,

A is For

Abortion Care Network

Access Reproductive Care-Southeast (ARC-Southeast)

ACCESS Women's Health Justice

Advocates for Youth

All-Options

Allentown Women's Center

Alliance for Justice

American Civil Liberties Union

Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon

Black Women's Health Imperative

Boulder Valley Women's Health Center

Catholics for Choice

Center for Reproductive Rights

Center on Reproductive Rights and Justice at UC Berkeley

Central Florida Women's Emergency Fund

Civil Liberties & Public Policy Program

⁴ "Polling on Repealing the Hyde Amendment." Hart Research Associates. Jun 2015. Available at <http://bit.ly/1Hi6eOY>

⁵ "Battleground Polling on Repealing the Hyde Amendment." Hart Research Associates. Sep 2016 Available at <http://bit.ly/2dpkujF>

Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights
Emergency Medical Assistance
Equality North Carolina
Feminist Women's Health Center
Gender Justice
Healthy and Free Tennessee
Ibis Reproductive Health
If/When/How: Lawyering for Reproductive Justice
Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health
In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda
Ipas
Jane Fund of Central Massachusetts
Jewish Women International
Lady Parts Justice League
Legal Voice
Lilith Fund
Mabel Wadsworth Center
Medical Students for Choice
Muslims for Progressive Values
NARAL Pro-Choice America
NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina
NARAL Pro-Choice Texas
National Abortion Federation
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association
National Health Law Program
National Institute for Reproductive Health
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Network of Abortion Funds
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Health Network

National Women's Law Center
New Orleans Abortion Fund
New Voices for Reproductive Justice
North Carolina Women United
North Dakota WIN Abortion Access Fund
Nursing Students for Sexual and Reproductive Health
Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health
Our Justice
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Planned Parenthood Votes! South Atlantic
Progress NC
Religious Institute
Reproductive Health Access Project
Secular Coalition for America
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States
SisterReach
Southwest Women's Law Center
Texas Equal Access Fund
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Western States Center
Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER)
Women's Law Project
Women's Medical Fund, Inc. (WI)
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