

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 19, 2016

The Honorable Donald Trump  
President-elect of the United States  
Presidential Transition Headquarters  
1800 F Street, NW, G117  
Washington, DC 20270-0117

Dear Mr. President-elect:

As Members of Congress 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 passage of the Hyde Amendment in 1976, anti-choice 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 ask that you demonstrate your commitment to being a President for all people in the United States by eliminating the Hyde Amendment, as well as related abortion coverage and care restrictions, from your Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Budget request.** The current federal restrictions on abortion coverage and care have a far-reaching impact on women enrolled in Medicaid and Medicare; federal employees and their dependents; Peace Corps Volunteers; Native American women; women in federal prisons and immigration detention centers; and residents of the District of Columbia. Together, these bans restrict the health coverage of millions of women of reproductive age across the country.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to producing a clean budget, we ask that you veto any bill that makes permanent the coverage restrictions impacting these populations or similarly denies abortion coverage or care to new populations. For too long, low-income women and women of color have shouldered the burden of our country's restrictive reproductive health laws. Together, we ask that you send a strong signal that this will no longer be the legacy of the United States.

For many, coverage for abortion care means the difference between getting the health care they need and being denied that care. Approximately one in four Medicaid-eligible women who would have had an abortion if funds were available must carry the pregnancy to term.<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> Williamson, H and Birchler, S. Infographic: Pass the EACH Woman Act. Center for American Progress. October 8, 2015. Available at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/news/2015/10/08/122895/infographic-pass-the-each-woman-act/>


<sup>2</sup> 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>

woman who is able to get the care she needs.<sup>3</sup>


Every person should be treated with dignity, compassion and respect—and that includes upholding a woman’s right to make her own decisions about whether to end a pregnancy. We urge you to begin your presidency with a clear and bold statement that abortion coverage bans have no place in our public policy by eliminating all such restrictions from your FY2018 Budget request. This will send a strong message to Congress and the country that everyone should be able to decide when and how to start a family—no matter their income, the type of insurance they have, or where they live.


Sincerely,


  
BARBARA LEE  
Member of Congress


  
JAN SCHAKOWSKY  
Member of Congress

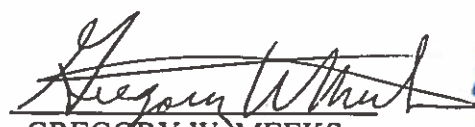
  
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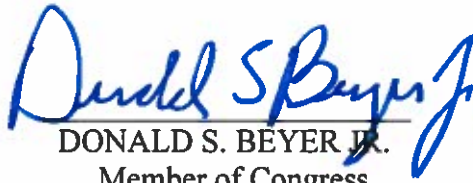
  
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<sup>3</sup> Foster DG, Dobkin LM, Upadhyay UD. "Denial of abortion care due to gestational age limits." *Contraception*.2013;87(1):3-5.



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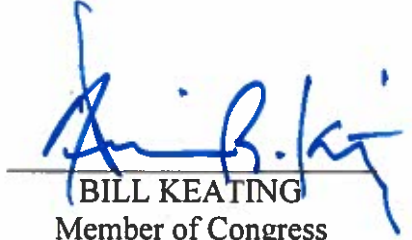
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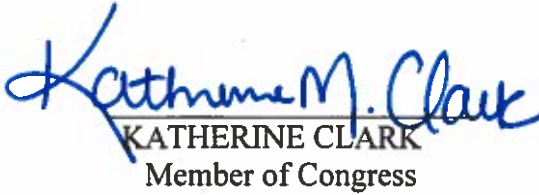
  
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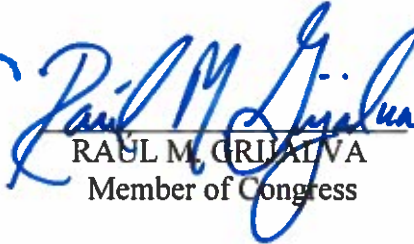
  
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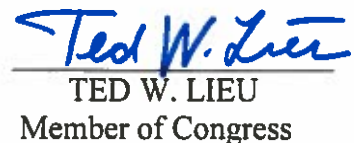
  
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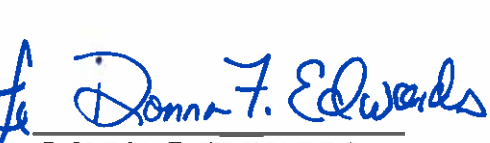
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