

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 14, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House of Representatives
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan:

We write to express our grave concern for efforts to undermine Title X family planning. Despite promises to focus on jobs and the economy, Republicans have started the 115th Congress with a total assault on women's choices, access to care, and economic security by:

- Charging ahead to sabotage and dismantle the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) while making no promises to preserve vital protections for women;
- Providing little to no details on their plans to replace ACA, while making a point to announce that their ACA repeal package will block access to Planned Parenthood, a high-quality, long-trusted provider of reproductive health services;
- Rushing to impose and dramatically expand the global gag rule, harming women around the world; and
- Advancing the *No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion and Abortion Insurance Full Disclosure Act* (H.R. 7) through the House, effectively banning private insurance companies from covering comprehensive reproductive health services.

Now, with their most recent effort to weaken the Title X national family planning program through the Congressional Review Act, Republicans have demonstrated that they will stop at nothing to limit women's access to vital health care. Sadly, this includes contraception and family planning services that all women need.

For more than 40 years, Title X has served as a cornerstone of safety-net care. As the only dedicated source of federal funding for family planning, Title X allows a diverse network of providers to deliver high-quality care to low-income, uninsured, or underinsured individuals and to those seeking confidential care. In 2014 alone, Title X-funded clinics helped prevent approximately 904,000 unintended pregnancies, 326,000 abortions, and 439,000 unplanned births.¹ In addition to direct clinical care, Title X also supports critical infrastructure needs for health centers, including new medical equipment and staff training that are not reimbursable under Medicaid and commercial insurance. This infrastructure is vital to ensuring safe, quality care at health centers which serve and provide basic health services to high-need populations.


¹ Jennifer Frost, Lori Frohwirth and Mia Zolna, "Contraceptive Needs and Services, 2014 Update," Guttmacher Institute (September 2016). <https://www.guttmacher.org/report/contraceptive-needs-and-services-2014-update>.

Throughout both Democratic and Republican administrations, Title X has been interpreted to prohibit state actions that block providers or classes of providers from participating in a Title X project based on factors unrelated to a provider's qualifications to perform the required services. The networks include providers ranging from state, county, and local health departments as well as hospitals, family planning councils, Planned Parenthood affiliates, federally qualified health centers and other private non-profit organizations. In fact, in instances when states have passed laws to limit provider participation in Title X, federal courts² have consistently held that those state laws are contrary to, and preempted by, federal law.³

In response to a growing number of states targeting family planning providers for exclusion from key federal health programs, including Title X, the previous Administration proposed the regulation "Compliance with Title X Requirements by Project Recipients in Selecting Subrecipients." The regulation, which was finalized in December 2016, helps ensure patient access to family planning services and supplies through qualified providers by reiterating that "no recipient making subawards for the provision of services as part of its Title X project may prohibit an entity from participating for reasons other than its ability to provide Title X services."⁴ During the rulemaking process, the Department of Health and Human Services received more than 145,000 comments, the vast majority of which supported the rule.


Women across the United States, and the men who support them, have had enough. It is unconscionable that this common sense clarification has become a political football for members of Congress who want to limit women's access to comprehensive reproductive health care. We urge you to stand in support of women and oppose this assault on contraceptive access and care.

Sincerely,


JUDY CHU
Member of Congress


LOUISE SLAUGHTER
Member of Congress


DIANA DEGETTE
Member of Congress


FRANK PALLONE, JR.
Member of Congress

² See *Planned Parenthood of Cent. North Carolina v. Cansler*, 877 F. Supp. 2d 310 (M.D.N.C. 2012); *Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri v. Brownback*, 799 F. Supp. 2d 1218 (D. Kan. 2011), rev'd on other grounds, *Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri v. Moser*, 747 F.3d 814 (10th Cir. 2014); *Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Tex. v. Sanchez*, 403 F.3d 324 (5th Cir. 2005); *Planned Parenthood of Billings, Inc. v. Montana*, 648 F. Supp. 47 (D. Mont. 1986).

³ 42 U.S.C. § 300(a). "The Secretary is authorized to make grants to and enter into contracts with public or nonprofit private entities to assist in the establishment and operation of voluntary family planning projects which shall offer a broad range of acceptable and effective family planning methods and services (including natural family planning methods, infertility services, and services for adolescents)." See 42 C.F.R. § 59.3.

⁴ US Department of Health and Human Services, "Compliance with Title X Requirements by Project Recipients in Selecting Subrecipients," December 19, 2016, <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-12-19/pdf/2016-30276.pdf>.



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Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



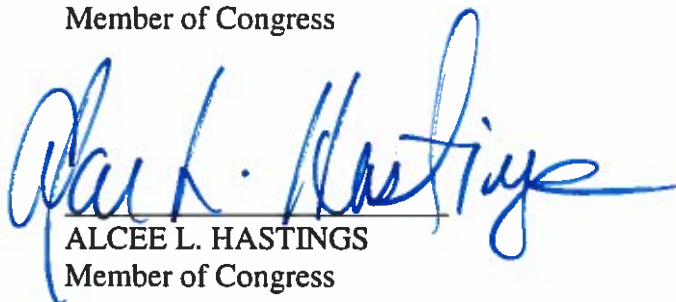
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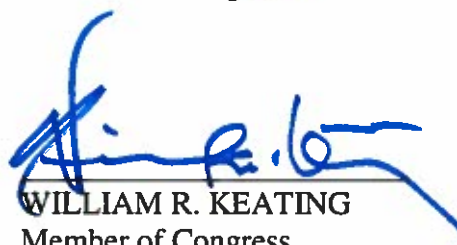
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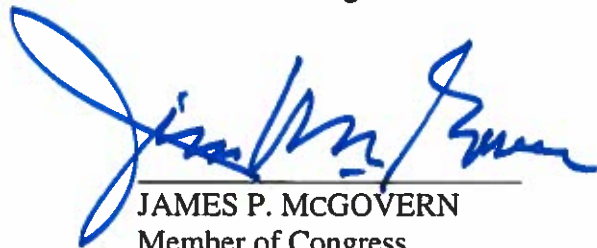
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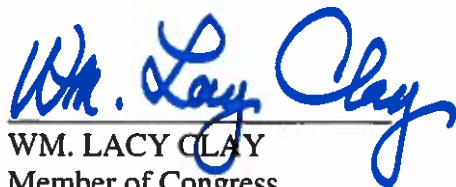
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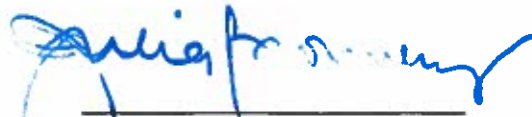
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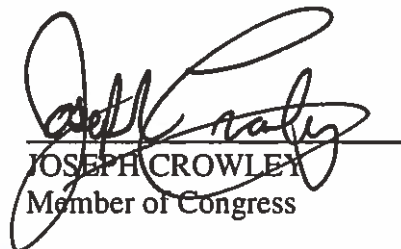
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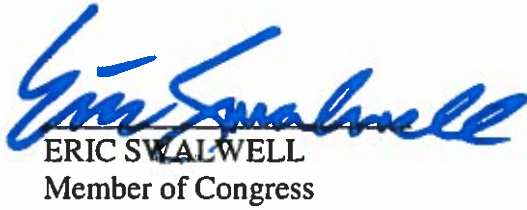
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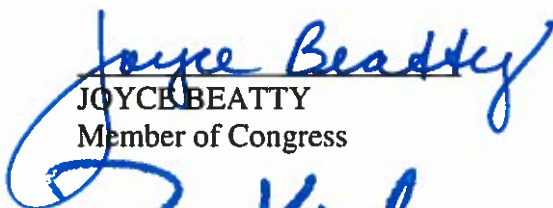
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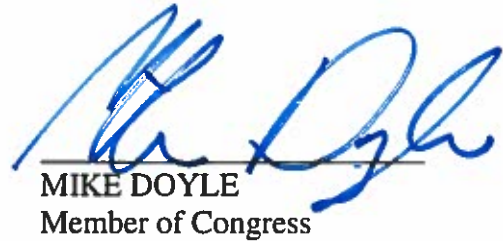
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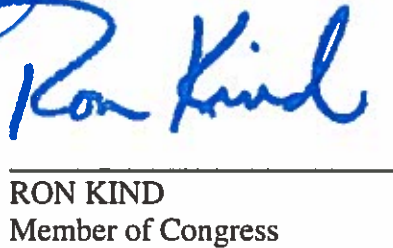
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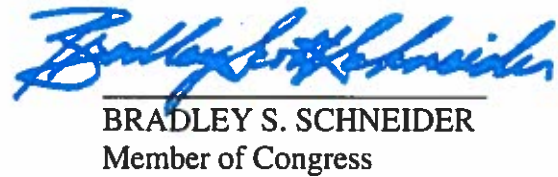
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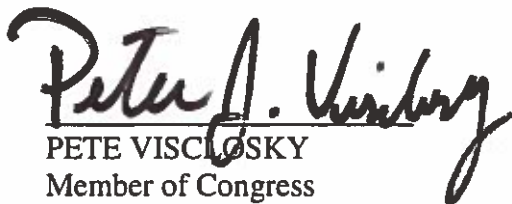
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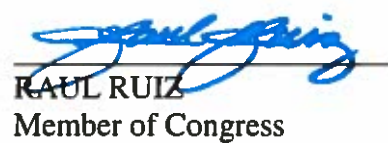
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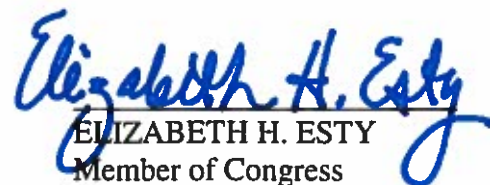
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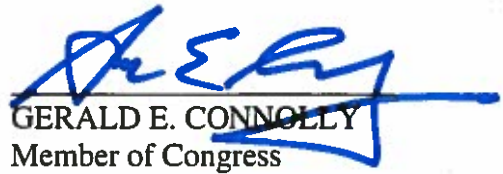

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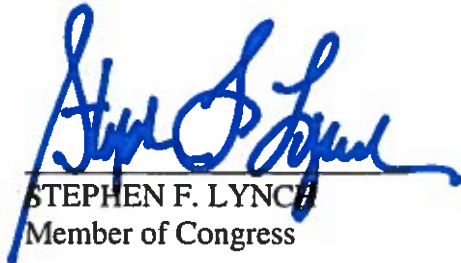
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