



January 24, 2017

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the more than 170,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I **urge you to oppose H.R. 7**, a dangerous limitation on abortion that puts women's health and rights at risk. H.R. 7 would withhold abortion coverage from virtually all women in the U.S. and potentially push insurers into ceasing coverage of abortion care. This bill is a part of a political strategy that seeks to interfere with women's personal decision-making around their reproductive health care.

AAUW supports the right of every woman to access safe, accessible, affordable, and comprehensive family planning and reproductive health services.ⁱ We believe that all women should be able to make their own decisions with advice and support from those they trust the most. We know that women look to doctors, family members, and other trusted individuals, not politicians, to make important medical decisions about their health.

H.R. 7 would make abortion restrictions that are often built into annual appropriations bills permanent. Such an action would withhold abortion coverage from almost all women – those who rely on Medicaid, federal insurance plans and health programs, as well as those who are Peace Corps Volunteers, Native American women, Washington, D.C. residents, and many others. In addition, by creating burdensome regulations for insurers to cover abortion services, many more women would lose access to the care they need. When policymakers deny women insurance coverage for abortion, women are forced to either carry the pregnancy to term or pay for care out of their own pockets. Consequently, cutting off access to or placing strict limitations on abortion can have profoundly harmful effects on public health, particularly for those who already face significant barriers to receiving care, such as low-income women, immigrant women, LGBTQ people, and women of color.

Again, I **urge you to oppose H.R. 7**, a dangerous limitation on abortion that puts women's health and rights at risk. Votes associated with this legislation may be scored in the AAUW Action Fund *Congressional Voting Record* for the 115th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/785-7720, or Anne Hedgepeth, Senior Government Relations Manager, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz
Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy

ⁱ AAUW. (2015). *AAUW Public Policy Program, 2015-2017*. www.aauw.org/resource/principles-and-priorities/