

July 9, 2024

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
House Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Majority Leader Schumer, House Minority Leader Jeffries, Chair Murray, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We, the 69 undersigned organizations committed to civil and human rights, write to urge you to reject any appropriations bills that contain riders that would restrict access to essential health care, including abortion, contraception, fertility, and gender-affirming care, whether delivered in-person or via telehealth. We are united in our belief that all people should be able to access the care they need, wherever they live, and to make informed decisions about their own bodies and lives. As such, we are appalled to see language limiting access to these services, both directly and by targeting organizations that provide such care, in the fiscal year (FY) 2025 appropriations bills, including many draconian and discriminatory proposals from House appropriators yet again.

Our country is facing a reproductive health care crisis, one that has been accelerated by the Supreme Court's unjustifiable and devastating decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturning *Roe v. Wade* and eliminating the constitutional right to abortion. In the first 100 days post-*Dobbs*, at least 66 clinics in 15 states stopped offering abortion services, and over the past year the average travel time to an abortion facility in the U.S. has more than tripled. As of July 2024, 21 states have bans on abortion in place, leaving 1 in 3 women, and many transgender, nonbinary, and intersex people, without abortion access and disproportionately impacting people of color, people with disabilities, young people, people living in rural areas, and people working to make ends meet. State policymakers have also taken *Dobbs* as an invitation to attempt to limit access to contraception, especially for adolescents and those enrolled in Medicaid.

Abortion bans and restrictions impact people across all areas of their lives, including their ability to work, care for the children they already have, and determine their own life's course. People who are turned away from abortion services and go on to give birth are much more

likely than are their peers who are able to access abortion care to experience a number of harmful impacts, including financial harm (such as an increase in household poverty, a reduction in credit score, an increase in debt, and a rise in the likelihood of bankruptcies and evictions), exacerbation of serious medical conditions (such as high blood pressure), and a greater likelihood of remaining in a relationship where interpersonal violence is present. Moreover, the states with the greatest number of abortion restrictions have the poorest postpartum health outcomes.

We have also seen a surge in state and federal attacks against transgender people, including targeted efforts to eliminate their access to essential health care. Half of U.S. states have passed laws banning best practice medical care for youth and anti-trans lawmakers have increasingly turned their attention to restricting care for adults. A large body of scientific evidence compiled over the last five decades illustrates that gender-affirming care is safe, effective care that improves the physical and mental health of transgender people. In fact, every major medical and mental health association in the country – representing more than 1.3 million doctors – supports individualized, age-appropriate gender-affirming care to promote the health and well-being of transgender people.

In the House, nearly all of the FY 2025 appropriations bills that have been introduced contain dangerous, discriminatory riders banning access to a wide range of gender-affirming care services for transgender youth and adults. If adopted, these policies would have devastating and far-reaching impacts: they would deprive transgender people of best practice, medically necessary care, impede health care institutions and providers from offering quality services, and limit access to health care for everyone. Similarly, nearly every bill includes harmful anti-abortion measures. These riders represent extreme political intrusion into the practice of medicine guided by evidence-based clinical standards, as well as into decision-making by patients, their families, and clinicians, and will disproportionately harm people of color, people with disabilities, young people, people living in rural areas, and people working to make ends meet.

Most alarmingly, last year, Congress allowed harmful riders to pass into the final appropriations bills including a ban on Pride flags (Sec. 7074 of SFOPs). We are deeply disappointed that riders like these passed into law and urge you to ensure that they do not pass again.

Legislative and policy attacks on access to both reproductive health care and gender-affirming care at home and abroad are attacks on the same basic right to self-determination and bodily autonomy. Many of the medical providers who offer abortion and other reproductive health services also offer gender-affirming care, as this care is part of the full spectrum of essential health services our communities need. Policies attempting to prevent people from receiving

either form of care ultimately serve to both obstruct and deprive many of our most vulnerable communities of time-sensitive, life-saving care.

**We, the undersigned 69 organizations, urge you in the strongest possible terms to make clear that any appropriations bill or package that includes language attempting to block access to reproductive or gender-affirming care is completely unacceptable.**

We thank you for your attention to this letter. Our organizations look forward to continuing to work with you to advance health equity and ensure access to essential health services for communities across the country.

Sincerely,

Advocates for Youth

AFT

AIDS United

All\* Above All

Alliance for Girls

American Association of University Women

American Civil Liberties Union

American Humanist Association

American Society for Reproductive Medicine

Americans United for Separation of Church and State

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Bend the Arc: Jewish Action

Care in Action

Center for Biological Diversity

End Rape On Campus

Esperanza United

Friends of the Earth

Guttmacher Institute

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America

Human Rights Campaign

Ibis Reproductive Health

Impact Fund

In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda

Indivisible

Interfaith Alliance  
Ipas  
Jewish Women International  
Just Solutions  
Justice and Joy National Collaborative (formerly National Crittenton)  
MomsRising  
Mujeres Latinas en Acción  
National Alliance to End Sexual Violence  
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum  
National Center for Transgender Equality  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Domestic Workers Alliance  
National Education Association  
National Employment Law Project  
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health Association  
National HIV/AIDS Housing Coalition  
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Justice  
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund  
National Network to End Domestic Violence  
National Organization for Women  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence  
National Women's Health Network  
National Women's Law Center  
National Women's Political Caucus  
PAI  
PFLAG National  
Physicians for Reproductive Health  
Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
Population Institute  
Positive Women's Network-USA  
Power to Decide  
Public Citizen  
Public Justice Center  
Reproductive Freedom for All (formerly NARAL Pro-Choice America)

RootsAction.org

Shattering Glass

SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change

The AIDS Institute

The National Domestic Violence Hotline

Trans Empowerment Project

Transgender Law Center

Union for Reform Judaism

Whitman-Walker Institute

Women of Reform Judaism