

September 7, 2021

Dear Representative/Senator,

This fall, Congress will consider health care funding in appropriations bills and in the \$3.5 trillion reconciliation bill. **We urge you to oppose any legislation that fails to maintain the longstanding Hyde principle of not funding elective abortion.**

Every year, Congress approves appropriations bills that fund federal programs. After the *Roe* decision, the federal government began funding abortion through Medicaid. In response, Congressman Henry Hyde offered the original Hyde Amendment to prohibit the federal funding of elective abortion. The original Hyde Amendment—which has remained in place for nearly five decades—applies only to funding appropriated through the Labor-HHS appropriations bill considered each year. In the nearly fifty years since the Hyde Amendment was first enacted, additional bipartisan amendments were added to other appropriations bills to prevent taxpayers from being forced to pay for abortion in the programs funded by their hard-earned dollars.

This Hyde family of pro-life riders together act as a bulwark against federal entanglement with and expansion of abortion. The original Hyde Amendment alone has saved nearly 2.5 million lives. This translates to roughly one in nine children born on Medicaid owing their life to Henry Hyde's amendment enacted in 1976. This longstanding policy has strong support from the American people. Polling consistently shows that a majority of Americans disapprove of their tax dollars being used to pay for abortion, including a third of self-identified pro-choice Americans.¹

Sadly, this year the House passed appropriations bills that eliminate many of the longstanding Hyde protections. Now it is up to the Senate to defend the unborn by insisting the consciences of Americans are protected. Earlier this month, the Senate showed its intent that Hyde principles should continue to govern federal spending, through the passage of an amendment offered by Senator Lankford. We urge all Senators to carry this intent across the finish line by voting against cloture on any appropriations bill that does not retain the Hyde family of pro-life riders.

Additionally, this fall there will be another battle over taxpayer funding of abortion. **As the House and Senate consider a \$3.5 trillion budget reconciliation bill drafted under the instructions in S.Con.Res. 14, we urge you to ensure that this spending does not expand taxpayer-funded abortion, and to exclude any backdoor proposals that would do an end run around the Hyde family of amendments and fund abortion against the will of the majority of Americans.**

¹ <https://www.kofc.org/en/resources/news-room/polls/kofc-americans-opinions-on-abortion012021.pdf>

Under budget reconciliation, it is possible to fund programs outside of the traditional appropriations process and bypass the Hyde family of amendments. While the specific health-related components of the reconciliation bill are still being drafted, Congress must ensure the following proposals under discussion would not fund elective abortion:

- Medicaid expansion
- Funding for community health centers and related programs
- Affordable Care Act expansion

As you know, reconciliation bills require just a simple majority in both the House and Senate, so every vote will count. **We urge opposition to any reconciliation bill that fails to maintain the longstanding Hyde principle of not funding elective abortion.**

The American people do not support federal funding of abortion. Abortion cuts against the spirit and soul of our nation's founding. We believe in unalienable rights that foster human dignity and protect life. We call on you, as our voice in Washington, to uphold these values in both appropriations and reconciliation legislation.

Sincerely,

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