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Congress of the United States

February 11, 2011

Chair
Select Intelligence Oversight Panel
Committee on Appropriations

Committee on Education
and Labor

Permanent Select Committee
on Intelligence

Committee on Natural Resources

The Honorable John Boehner
Office of the Speaker
H- 232 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Eric Cantor
Office of the Majority Leader
H-329 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Cantor:

I write respectfully to inform you of my strong opposition to H.R. 3, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act and H.R. 217, Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act. Both of these bills are thinly veiled attempts to prohibit American women from being able to access comprehensive health care. I urge you to not to bring these dangerous and far reaching bills to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote.


Regardless of our personal opinion about abortion, the Supreme Court has determined that abortion is a legally protected medical procedure. The choice of whether or not to have an abortion is up to a woman, her faith, and her family, not the federal government. The deceptively named No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act claims that it would enact a government-wide prohibition on federal subsidies for abortion and health insurance plans cover it. In truth it is an unprecedented attempt to limit health insurance coverage for American women, raise taxes on small businesses, infringe on the legally protected rights of American Servicewomen, and make this legal medical procedure inaccessible to women.

Most offensively, H.R. 3 as introduced, creates a nebulous definition of rape that would require a woman to carry a fetus to term if it is deemed that she was not "forcibly raped." Forcible is a term with no legal definition. This would return our country to the long outdated standard of rape law, where a rape verdict depended not on whether the victim consented, but on whether outsiders thought she resisted as hard as humanly possible. This law was changed because it was rarely found that the victim had "fought hard enough" to resist her rapist. We should not turn back the clock and revert to a standard that further victimizes rape victims.

H.R. 217, the Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act, is equally far reaching and unnecessary. Federal statute already prohibits any funds under this program from being used for abortion services. The bill in fact would effectively dismantle Title X, the country's family-planning network, which provides basic health-care services, including birth control and cancer screenings. As a board member of my local Planned Parenthood, one of the leading providers of family planning services, I am well aware of the number of important health care services that it makes available to my constituents. More than 90 percent of the care that Planned Parenthood health centers provide every day is primary and preventive, including wellness exams, cancer screenings, immunizations, contraception and STD testing, and treatment. For many women who receive care at a women's health center consider it their primary source of health care. Taking away Title X funds from Planned Parenthood and other women's health centers would deny millions of women throughout the country access to their trusted health care providers.

Congress should not impede on the legally protected rights American women. We should not deny women the right to legal medical procedures. We should not deny women access to life saving healthcare centers. We should work together to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies rather than scoring political points and reviving the culture war. H.R. 3, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act and H.R. 217, Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act are unnecessary and offensive bills that are not worthy of consideration by this esteemed body and should not be brought up for a vote in the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,



RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress

RH/agb