*May, 2021
The UUWF has signed on to this letter.*

Dear [Representative/Senator],

As organizations committed to ensuring all people can access reproductive health care, including abortion, however much money they make, no matter where they’re from, or whatever their race or gender, we believe that each of us should be able to make decisions about pregnancy and parenting that are best for our families without political interference. However, policymakers have enacted bans on insurance coverage of abortion that push this decision out of reach for many, particularly those working to make ends meet. To this end, **we urge you to put forth appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2022 that does not include bans or restrictions on insurance coverage for abortion.**

Since the first passage of the Hyde Amendment in 1976, the appropriations process has been used as a vehicle to systematically deny insurance coverage of abortion. Studies show that when policymakers place restrictions on Medicaid coverage of abortion, it forces one in four poor women to carry an unwanted pregnancy to term[[1]](#footnote-1). Additionally, a woman who seeks an abortion, but is denied, is more likely to fall into poverty than one who is able to get an abortion[[2]](#footnote-2).

This is a crucial moment for Black, Indigenous, and people of color, for women, LGBTQ folks, immigrants, and young people. Our communities continue to bear the brunt of the pandemic, and are also the most harmed by the Hyde Amendment and other coverage bans​. ​We are fighting for a future in which abortion is affordable, available, and supported for anyone who seeks care — without barriers based on who you are, where you are from, or how much you earn. W​e are reimagining a world in which each of us makes a living wage and everyone has access to full-spectrum reproductive health care, including abortion.

We urge you, as leaders of the Appropriations Committee, to draft and pass federal spending bills that end the shameful legacy of the Hyde Amendment and related abortion coverage restrictions. Now is the time to take action for people working to make ends meet and stop the relentless attacks on abortion coverage. Together, these bans restrict the health coverage of more than 7 million women, over half of whom are women of color. We ask that Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations legislation be free of abortion coverage restrictions, including those that impact the following populations: (i) Medicaid, Medicare, and Children’s Health Insurance Program beneficiaries; (ii) federal employees and their dependents; (iii) Peace Corps volunteers; (iv) Native American women (iv) women in federal prisons and detention centers, including those detained for immigration purposes; and (v) low-income women in the District of Columbia through the use of local funds. This includes the Weldon Amendment, which has been attached to Hyde and used to threaten states that seek to ensure abortion coverage. Additionally, we urge you to reject any efforts to add new policy riders that seek to undermine access to health care.

Access to reproductive health care services, including abortion, is crucial for justice and economic security and should not depend on someone’s income, insurance coverage, immigration status, or where they live. Withholding coverage for abortion care creates profound hardships for people across the country, particularly for those who already face significant barriers to health care such as people working to make ends meet, immigrants, young people, women of color, and transgender and gender nonconforming people. For many, coverage for abortion means the difference between getting the health care they need and being denied that care.

Each of us should be able to make decisions about our health and our futures with dignity and have control over our own economic security. Yet these policies have harmed our families, our communities, and our health for far too long. We implore the 117th Congress to lift abortion coverage bans and end the Hyde Amendment. People working to make ends meet, including women of color, LGBTQ people, and young people are demanding bold action from their [Representatives/Senators], and we look forward to working with you to end these harmful policies.

Sincerely,

**[Organizations]**

1. Stanley K. Henshaw, Theodore J. Joyce, Amanda Dennis, Lawrence B. Finer and Kelly Blanchard. Restrictions on Medicaid Funding for Abortions: A Literature Review. (Guttmacher Institute, 2009). Available at http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/MedicaidLitReview.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Diana Greene Foster, PhD, Sarah C. M. Roberts, DrPH and Jane Mauldon, PhD. Socioeconomic consequences of abortion compared to unwanted birth. Abstract from the American Public Health Association’s annual meeting 2012. Available at https://apha.confex.com/apha/140am/webprogram/Paper263858.html [↑](#footnote-ref-2)