

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 19, 2023

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

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Vice Chair Collins:

We write to urge you to keep the FY24 appropriations bills free of any new poison pill policy riders. Partisan, discriminatory, and harmful policy riders have no place in appropriations bills. The Senate has had tremendous success both passing bipartisan bills in committee and on the Senate floor because these bills are free of new poison pill riders. Unfortunately, the House appropriations bills are filled with new highly partisan provisions, including anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQ+ riders, that should be removed from any final appropriations bills.

Our country is facing a reproductive health care crisis, one that has been accelerated by the Supreme Court's extremist decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. As of November 7, 2023, 14 states are enforcing abortion bans at any point in pregnancy and seven states have imposed abortion bans with limits that range from six to 18 weeks. These bans leave 1 in 3 women, as well as transgender and nonbinary people, without access to abortion and disproportionately impact people of color, people with disabilities, young people, people living in rural areas, and people with low incomes.

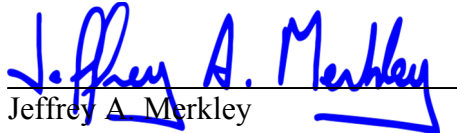
Yet in the midst of this crisis, House Republicans have proposed several new anti-abortion policy riders. These riders include a provision to force back in place medically unnecessary restrictions on medication abortion, a measure to stop the implementation of the Biden administration's executive orders to protect access to abortion care, and a measure that would jeopardize access to essential postgraduate medical training in abortion care. If adopted, these provisions would seriously undermine pregnant people's ability to make decisions about their bodies and providers' ability to provide necessary care.


At the same time, House Republicans have used the appropriations process to push extremist anti-LGBTQ+ measures, which threaten to disrupt the lives and fundamental dignity of the LGBTQ+ community. Anti-LGBTQ+ legislation is already on the rise; in 2023 alone, more than 575 anti-LGBTQ+ bills have been introduced across 41 state legislatures, and more than 80 of those bills have been signed into law.


Against this backdrop, House Republicans have introduced more than 50 anti-LGBTQ+ provisions across all 12 appropriations bills. These provisions include those allowing the government to discriminate against married same-sex couples as well as language to prevent the administration from enforcing laws to protect LGBTQ+ people from discrimination. Seven of the House's twelve appropriations bills also contain dangerous riders that ban access to gender-affirming care, which would deprive transgender people of medically necessary and often life-saving healthcare.

Controversial poison pill provisions like those riddled throughout the House appropriations bills will severely undermine Congress' ability to push forward must-pass funding measures to keep the government open and working for the American people.

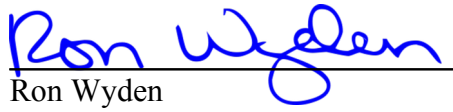
Sincerely,

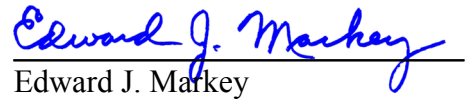
  
Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator


  
Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator


  
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator


  
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

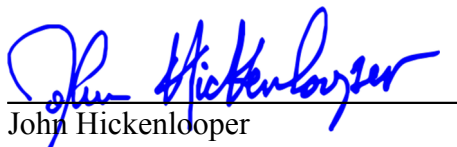
  
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

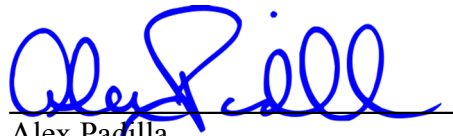
  
Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

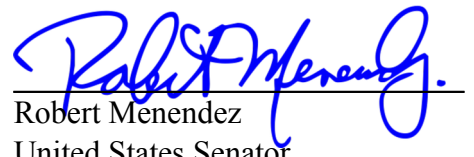
  
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator

  
Raphaela Butler  
United States Senator

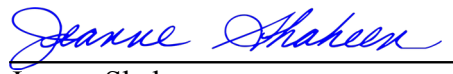
  
Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator


  
John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator

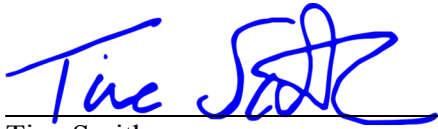
  
Alex Padilla  
United States Senator

  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

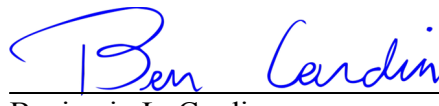
  
Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator

  
Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator

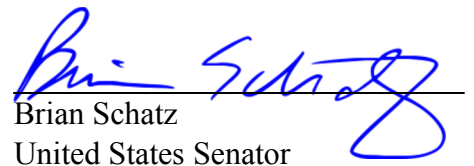
  
Jack Reed  
United States Senator



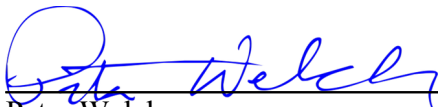
Tina Smith  
United States Senator



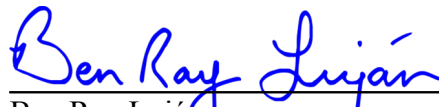
Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



Peter Welch  
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján  
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



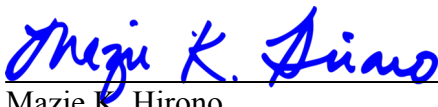
Mark Kelly  
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator




Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

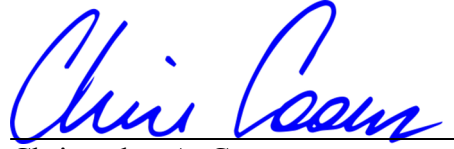


Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator




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Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator



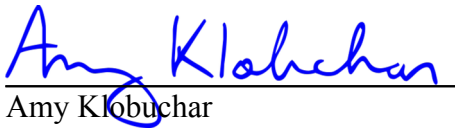
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Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



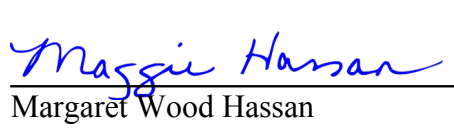
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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



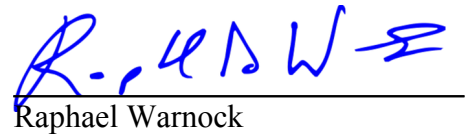
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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



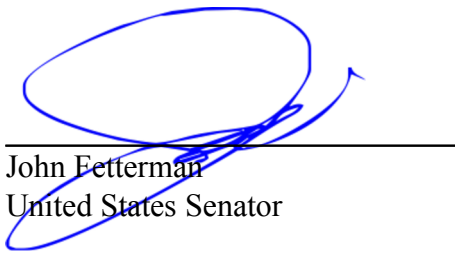
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Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator




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Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator




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John Fetterman  
United States Senator




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Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



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Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



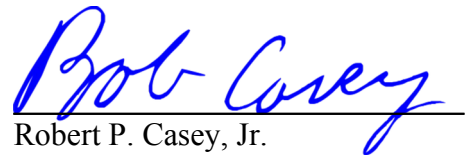
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Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



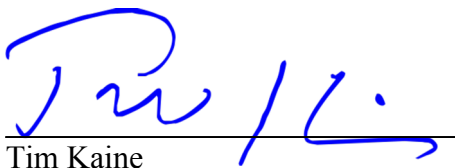
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Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



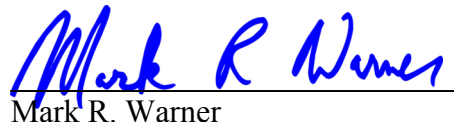
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Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



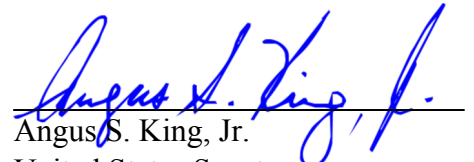
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Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



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Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



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Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator

CC:

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Senate Majority Leader  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader